

**Edited Transcript of the
Public Meeting of the
U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy
November 29, 2011**



*A Discussion of Narratives
in partnership with the RAND Corporation
Santa Monica, California*

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Introduction

This U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy meeting was on the topic of strategic narratives and was held in partnership with the RAND Corporation. The meeting took place at the RAND offices at 1176 Main Street in Santa Monica, CA, in the Forum Auditorium. It began at 9:00 am and ended at 3:00 p.m. with doors opened for registration and continental breakfast at 8:30 a.m.

The two keynote speakers and two panels explored the topic of strategic narratives including what they are and how they might be shaped and countered. Conference participants delved into the impact of words and actions on evolving narratives as well as the complex influence of environmental factors. The event was webcast live and emphasized interactivity with the audience.

This meeting was open to the public, Members of staff of Congress, the State Department, Defense Department and other Government agencies, the media, and any others interested in public diplomacy. This meeting was “on the record” and this transcript is posted to the ACPD website (www.state.gov/pdcommission). For further information contact the Commission at (202) 203-7463 or pdcommission@state.gov.

Agenda

8:30 - 9:00	Arrival and breakfast
9:00 - 9:05	Opening remarks: Lindsey Kozberg, RAND's VP of Public Affairs
9:05 - 9:15	Opening remarks: William Hybl, Chairman, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy
9:15 - 9:30	Welcome, Introduction, Admin Notes: Matt Armstrong, Executive Director, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy
9:30 - 10:30	Keynote Speaker: Dr. Steven Corman
10:30 - 10:45	Break
10:45 - 12:00	Panel 1: Dr. Nick Cull, Barry A. Sanders, Dalia Dassa Kaye, Philip J. (P.J.) Crowley; moderator: Cliff Gilmore
12:00 - 12:30	Break & Get Box Lunch courtesy of RAND Corporation
12:30 - 1:15	Keynote Speaker: Dr. Eric Larson
1:15 - 1:30	Break
1:30 - 2:45	Panel 2: Amb. Richard LeBaron, Damon Stevens, Dr. Christopher Paul, CDR Jonathan Worthington; moderator: Matt Armstrong
2:45 - 3:00	Closing remarks: Lyndon Olson, Vice Chairman, U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy

[Panelist biographies are available at the end of this document.](#)

Meeting Transcript

Opening Comments

LINDSEY KOZBERG: (in progress)...and dedicated to taking on tough questions that reach communities around the world. Today we're joined by several distinguished scholars and commentators, not all from the West Coast, but many of whom are westerners like RAND, and while we keep up an active presence in Washington D.C. as an institution, we very much appreciate the Commission's dedication to holding their meeting outside of Washington D.C. Chris Paul has helped to bring this exciting discussion to RAND, and I want to thank him very much for the work that he has done, and I trust that all of you will find today's discussion stimulating and informative. As a communications professional, I spend a good time thinking about storytelling and engaging in a little bit of that on behalf of RAND. In recent years, we've expanded to eleven offices on three continents and just as the publics that we reach as an institution have grown, the channels for reaching those publics have proliferated. Those are exciting challenges for us and I hope that we might learn a bit from today's discussion and exploration of narrative.

In addition to sharing a warm welcome to RAND, it is my pleasure to introduce the Chairman of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy, William Hybl.

Mr. Hybl is Chairman and Chief Executive of the El Pomar Foundation, one of the oldest and largest philanthropic foundations in the western United States. They fund programs in education, healthcare, amateur sports, human services, the environment and the arts. It sounds a little bit like the diversity of RAND's research programs, and we know that they share our dedication to making a difference around the world.

In addition to his role as a leading philanthropist, Mr. Hybl has a long and distinguished public service record that includes diplomatic service and leadership within the Olympic and amateur sports movement. He has twice served as President of the United States Olympic Committee and has served as a member of the International Olympic Committee. He is trained as an attorney, lives in possibly the most beautiful place on earth and has served as former Special Counsel to the President of the United States and was elected to and served in the Colorado House of Representatives.

If I were to detail more about his distinguished career, I would probably take up the better part of your first session, so with no further ado I will introduce you to Mr. William Hybl. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN WILLIAM HYBL: Thank you, Lindsey. You know, as we look at the ocean here in Santa Monica, this could be the most beautiful place in the world. It's really terrific for those of us that don't have oceans and don't have really this kind of weather.

You know, I want to welcome everyone today. This is not only here but we're online with a webcast today and so for those of you that are online, we welcome you. It's clearly, as indicated by Lindsey, a great opportunity for us to be on the West Coast. This will be the only time this year that we're here, but we have five of our six sitting commissioners with us today.

First is our Vice Chairman, Ambassador Lyndon Olson who's with us. Lyndon, in the real world, is Chairman of Hill & Knowlton, the public relations and media firm. Ambassador Penne Peacock, who flew in last night from Paris—welcome, Penne, I hope you stay awake here. Sim Farar—Sim is from Santa Monica and had just a short drive joining us this morning. And from Illinois, Anne Wedner.

Also with us this morning is our Executive Director, and I want to say just a little bit about Matt Armstrong. Matt, in a really, a twelve-month period, has made a real difference in the emphasis and the impact of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. Matt, we want to thank you, and you have your military advisor here, Cliff Gilmore, who works for the Commission.

Today's meeting really reflects the shift in the Commission's approach to better fulfill the missions of the President, what the President and the Congress have charged us with. The missions are one, to appraise the Government's activities and to understand and inform and influence foreign publics; and two, to be an advocate for all of these activities.

The diversity of the audience here and online, and in previous meetings, represents what we feel will be a more vigorous inclusion and engagement of the various stakeholders in public diplomacy and strategic communications so that we may provide better advice and increase the understanding of and the support of public diplomacy.

I will let Matt go into details on some of the changes that have been made but as far as today goes, the topic is narratives, what they are and how they might be shaped and countered.

In the past, narratives were relatively easy to establish and manage, when governments and the relatively few media organizations were the gatekeepers of information and communications. Over the past ten years though, things have changed. We've come to understand and appreciate how the world has changed to the point where nearly everyone can have an impact on and a strategic influence with a keyboard, with a camera phone or an internet connection, and we continued to see that over the last twelve months. In fact, the gloves are off when defining and leveraging the meaning, purpose and the story of our adversaries and, frankly, the narrative of our own values.

Ultimately the narrative of the United States is about leadership and relationships. When it comes to leadership, it is imperative that we understand that what we say and do, as what we fail to say and do, will have an impact. We must ensure that what we do will be consistent with one another and the rest of the world, whether friend or foe, knowing that it's important that we both be credible and trustworthy.

Back in 1875, Ralph Waldo Emerson argued in pen that "what we are speaks louder than what we say," and I think that is an ongoing challenge for the United States. So as we go forward in public diplomacy, we should keep that in mind.

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has struggled to figure out exactly where it fits and what role will be in the world as it evolves. We are challenged as never before to maintain our credibility on the international stage and strengthen the trust of our friends and allies, both new and old, and as we all know, that's a changing dynamic. This is why the concept of narratives is important. It has to do not only with how we are perceived by others but with

how we perceive ourselves and what we imagine ourselves to be in the future. Our narrative is in part historical. We can look back on our past to see where we've come from and how we got there, as we are today. But our narrative is also a story that has to unfold, and we have one basic choice to make about our narrative as we look ahead. Will we let it happen to us or will we write that narrative ourselves?

The Commission looks forward to this discussion as we pursue and write the narrative for ourselves, and we also look forward to the questions from the audience and panelists today as we explore this topic.

Let me finish by saying we hope you will come away from this meeting first with a better understanding of some of the challenges facing public diplomacy and, secondly, greater creativity in how we conceive and conduct public diplomacy to better support our nation's foreign policy in this complex and dynamic environment.

Let me ask Matt to come up and Matt, again, you've done a great job with your staff in moving public diplomacy into this decade and forward, and we appreciate the great work. I say that on behalf of all the Commission. Thank you.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can we turn the screen back on for the agenda? So thanks, everybody. I want to reiterate what the Chairman said. Thank you very much for coming out here and thanks for the online audience. I think we may be in California casual with the audience, so I'm hoping more show up, but we have the online audience.

I want to make some comments about the structure of the meeting, and that is it is on the record. The transcript will be published. The video of the meeting will be published and the staff will write a report on the meeting. Well, as the agenda comes back on the screen, you will see some of the administrative details. If you have a BlackBerry and if you hear that familiar BlackBerry music over the speaker system, please assume that it's your BlackBerry causing it and turn it off. Otherwise, just please put it on vibrate.

There will be a few fifteen—two fifteen-minute breaks before, let's see, after Panel 1, or before Panel 1 and before Panel 2. We have a thirty-minute break right before lunch and that's to go take your break and get your box lunch and come in here to eat while the afternoon keynote is taking place. The other administrative details, the bathrooms are out the doors on your left. If there is any emergency, fire or whatnot, please remain calm, the standard stuff, and the fire exits are clearly marked. Now, the administrative details are out of the way.

So there's the revised schedule; you have a hard copy. Again, the breaks, panel, we have the same finish time. And now a bit about the Commission.

Today's communication environment is remarkable for its speed, ubiquity and diversity. This diversity is found in the global publics the U.S. Government engages and within the Government, whereas in the past a single agency was responsible for facilitating and shaping public awareness and perception of the U.S. It was awfully easy back then. You just had the USIA. Today it's much different. It's a whole of government approach, and I think that's reflected by the panelists that we have speaking today, as well as the audience, as well as those that we constantly and frequently engage on behalf of the Commission. Today's rapidly evolving global communication environment is one where the human interaction is paramount, and we

need to pay attention to that. I'm reminded by something that a boss of mine in a previous life -- or two or three previous lives ago -- when I worked a building where Anthropologie is now on Third Street. This was before they revitalized Third Street, and I worked in a little office there and I worked desktop support. An interesting thing that my boss said that stuck with me and it didn't really have the same resonance as it does now, and he said, "Think about the listening you're creating," and that still exists today, and I think that's a major theme for the discussion we're having today, the whole concept of narratives.

We've asked the panelists to talk about narratives in a different light, in a different frame, to really get engaged on this subject with you and with each other to further the concept and the imperative of what narratives are and why they are so important. This is not intended to be just another conference. We intend for this to be of value to you, the Congress, the President and the Secretary of State. Those are the entities, the people, the publics that we—that we are charged with, as the Chairman said. The Commission's been around -- many people don't know this because we've reactivated this organization, or invigorated it -- since 1948. It was created initially as the Advisory Commission on Information. It actually existed in 1946 as the Advisory Committee on Radio Programming. So we have a long history, and there remains an imperative today—arguably more so in a much more dynamic, hyperactive environment where not only is the influence democratized, where anybody can influence anybody else, but so is destruction and disruption. So getting this right, being better at, it is important.

So one of the missions behind us is to better fulfill the mission of informing and empowering the diverse community authorizing, funding, conceiving, conducting and criticizing public diplomacy. We can't make you do the right thing if you're the policymaker or the practitioner, but we can empower you with the right information and then you can make your own decision.

One of the ways that the Commission is changing to satisfy the needs of the broad community is that instead of doing a report every two years, we have changed and the Commission has signed off on this change. We have, we're going to continue to do a Commission Report. That is a report of opinion and recommendations that are signed off by the entire Commission. It'll include diverse voices.

We have something that's going to be called the Working Paper, which is signed off by at least one Commissioner. Obviously that will give us additional agility that we wouldn't have had with a whole paper by the whole Commission. We also have something, and we have several of these in the pipeline right now called Staff Reports. As the Congress and the President doesn't want the opinion of staff, these are simply objective statements that frame the issues, and they're essentially backgrounders. So you're going to see a lot more product from the Commission.

But this meeting today is an example of the diversity and the ongoing efforts of the Commission to fulfill its mission. This is a diverse audience. The product that's coming out of this is a transcript, an analytical product, the video, so that it's not just you in this room that's going to experience this. It's the online audience that's going to experience this and it's also anybody else that wants to do research on this subject in the future. We will make it easier for people to understand the topics we're talking about here, and that is an important thing—facet

that I have found in my conversations with Congress, the various departments and the executive branch, that there are a lot of people that mean well. We just don't have the quality of knowledge out there or the level of information out there, and that is one thing that we are seeking to do with this type of forum, to increase that and better that. So as Lindsey noted, we have a diverse set of panelists. I'm very pleased that you have come out here. I encourage the audience to actively engage. The format of this meeting is question and answer. We have asked the panelists to make brief statements. The first moderator is Cliff Gilmore, Senior Military Advisor to the Commission. He has the shepherd's nook to stop your comments, panelists, if you're going beyond. I have that same power, and the whole idea is so that we get into discourse, we have a conversation.

Public diplomacy is about conversation and understanding, and that's the way we're formatting the environment. I want to reiterate, this is on the record. A transcript will be available. If you have questions or—about the transcript and anything else about the Commission, happy to be available. So with that, we're actually ahead of schedule. Let me introduce—actually let me just, since we're so far ahead of schedule, are there any questions by any chance? Excellent, all right. Let me introduce our first keynote speaker, Steve Corman, a friend of mine. Steve is the Herberger—did I say that right, Herberger?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Right.

MATT ARMSTRONG: I should have practiced that one. Herberger Professor and Director of the Center for Strategic Communication in the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at Arizona State University. He currently leads the Office of Naval Research Project studying Islamist extremists' use of narrative, and is co-author of Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism. I would encourage everybody to go take a look at COMOPS, comops.org.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Right.

MATT ARMSTRONG: That's his website. They're actively promoting the dialogue on this subject. Let me note that we have ASU represented. We have USC represented. Do we have any USC students? Several of them said they were going to come. Ah, there we are. Look at all the hands raised, yes, and we also have UCLA represented, so very, very happy that we have the broad range. Do we have any Pepperdine or Loyola by any chance, to just sort of round out the colleges in the area? No, okay, but UCLA, USC, Arizona, thanks for coming. I won't make a comment about the football game. So with that, Steve, the floor is yours.

Morning Keynote

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Mr. Chairman, Ambassadors, ladies and gentlemen, good morning. It's a real privilege for me to be here to talk to you about the important topic of narrative, and I certainly thank Matt for inviting me out. I also want to add my voice to the appreciation for holding this meeting on the West Coast. For once, I get to do a presentation without sitting my butt in a plane for eight hours and enduring a three-hour jetlag to do it, so I thank you for doing that as well.

So my topic today—we're moving a little slow on the slide transitions here—has to do with the subject of narrative and, at the risk of preaching to the choir, I want to start out a little

bit talking about why narrative's important, then what it is. Cliff sent out a mailer to all the panelists and speakers before the workshop here, and some questions came up, you know, what is narrative, why is it so important, why are you interested in it, and I hope to address some of those questions here. Then I want to just take a couple of slides to show you about a grant project that we're—that Matt mentioned that we're working on, and then finally, end with five principles we've identified for counter-narrative work. And also let me mention that the stuff I'm going to be talking about today is in the realm of Islamist extremism and many of the examples I'll use are from that domain as well, but the things I'm going to be talking about are just as applicable to strategic communication in non-extremist contexts.

So to start out, the issue of the importance of narrative. You know, why is it so important? And there are a couple of answers to that, having to do with the sort of rationality it embodies and the psychology of it.

So in terms of the rationality, the idea is that narratives embody an alternate form of rationality and as Muriel Rukeyser says here, "The universe is made of stories, not atoms." And a guy in our field named Walter Fisher from USC—I think he's still at USC, yes?—developed this, something several years ago called the Narrative Paradigm, and basically what he does in that formulation is you say we like to think that we make decisions and so forth in terms of logic, and this is a scan out of a page of a logic textbook from a course I had many decades ago in philosophy, and of course that has to do with taking facts and applying rules of reasoning to reach conclusions and things like that.

The problem is that those sorts of things fail us when we're presented with a picture like this and have to kind of figure out what's going on. It's not really easy to apply rules to that. We have to look at what's represented in the picture, try to figure out what's going on, what events may be represented, how they sequence together. In other words, we have to form a narrative basically, to interpret that, that sort of image, and logic fails us in that. And this is essentially what Fisher argues. He distinguishes the logical paradigm, the world we like to think that we live in, from the narrative paradigm; and so on the logical paradigm, we're thinking beings, we approach life as a series of logical problems, we decide by argument and decision-making, and validity of conclusions is based on knowledge and understanding.

But in the narrative paradigm, according to Fisher, people are storytellers who continually recreate stories to make sense of the world. They decide things based on history and culture, and validity is a matter of what he calls "good reasons". So to unpack that last item a little bit, there are two aspects of narrative validity, and one is coherence.

So let me give you an example of an incoherent story. Steve got out of bed, dried himself off, put on his clothes and took a shower before coming to give the presentation at RAND. Now logically there's no reason I couldn't do that, but it doesn't make sense from a narrative point of view because we know that's not the way humans do things.

Fidelity is another example, another aspect of narrative validity, and that's basically how well the story makes sense in the context of other stories we know. So here's a story for you. The king loved his subjects very much and they loved him, so one day he set fire to the village and slaughtered all the villagers as they ran from the flames. Okay, so logically a king has absolute power. A king could do something like that. Perhaps there have been crazy kings who

have done things like that, but basically there are no good reasons why a king who loves his subjects would do such a thing. So, according to Fisher, and I agree, narrative embodies this alternate sense of rationality, if you will.

There are also psychological reasons why narratives are important, and there is a body of research in psychology called Narrative Transportation Theory, and what it talks about is the case I'm sure you've all experienced when you've gotten carried away in a good book or watching a good movie or even a good television program when you sort of get absorbed into the story and you sort of lose track of what's going on around you and it's almost as if you're in that world. When transportation happens, there are lots of interesting psychological effects. You have more cognitive response. There's more self-reference, so you tend to project yourself into the story more. You have more positive evaluation of the main characters in the story. You tend to have more story-consistent beliefs and change your attitudes accordingly, and there's less of a tendency to counter-argue.

So the psychological research here is, you know, basically supporting what Fisher says about narrative, that when you get transported into a narrative, you sort of go into this alternate frame of processing or reference. So that's really why a narrative is important. Moving onto what it is, so as part of the project we've been working on, we thought that there was a need for a framework that is more usable for people like the people in this room or the ones watching the presentation, and that's because most narrative theory comes from the humanities. And the humanities basically have a tradition of individualistic scholarship, so everybody sort of works on their own.

There's very little empirical testing of theory. People have used the same terms to refer to different things and it's really not too much of a stretch to say that there are as many theories of narratives as there are narrative theorists. So what we had tried—what we've tried to do is take that, that bundle of concepts and boil it down into a perspective that's more pragmatic, if you will. So the main thing we do is draw a distinction between story and narrative. So a story is just, you know, what everybody would think of it as. It's like those little stories I told just a moment ago. It's an account of some sequence of events and it leads to some sort of resolution or potential resolution.

A narrative, on the other hand, is a coherent system of interrelated and sometimes sequentially organized story that share a common rhetorical desire to resolve a conflict. So this diagram at the bottom sort of illustrates this idea of narrative. So narratives are rooted in some sort of deficiency.

In the context that we're studying, Islamist extremism, that's some sort of conflict, but it can also be uncertainty or something like that, so some deficient situation. That produces a desire in the audience and there is a, either projected or actual, satisfaction of that desire. And so what the narrative, what the system of stories does is it puts together participants, actions and events that basically create an arc leading from the desire to the resolution, and so that's, that's basically how they work. So talking a little bit about this claim that a narrative is a system of stories, I want to explain what we mean by that.

So first of all, it's a set of stories; a narrative isn't just one story. The sort of vernacular use of "narrative" sometimes equates the two, but a narrative is a set of stories and they share

obvious things like themes for one thing, so they all talk about similar subjects. We all know that a good novel isn't just one story. It's a bunch of different sub-stories that are woven together into a broader narrative. So they share themes. They also share story forms, and those are standard patterns on which stories may be based, and they define typical characters, actions and sequences.

I have an example of a story form for you here. One of the guys in our—on our grant project is a film and media studies guy, and he points out that films like *Forrest Gump*, *Beverly Hills Chihuahua* and *Slumdog Millionaire* all share a common story form, that is a rags-to-riches story, that, despite surface differences in the movies, and I would argue also quality, they share this same underlying story form.

Another thing that a narrative shares are archetypes, and those are standard characters you might expect to find in stories, and when you find that standard character in a story, it tells you something when they're sort of slotted into that role. It tells you something about their expected actions, what will happen to them, what they'll do, how they'll approach situations and so forth. A hero, for example, or a villain would be an example of an archetype in a story.

Before moving to the next concept, I want to show you this slide and ask you what these five guys have in common, let you think about it for a minute, and I'll get to the answer in such a second.

Some narratives, by virtue of standing the test of time, being trans-historical and deeply embedded in a particular culture, rise to the level of master narratives, and master narratives are widely known by members of a culture. They're often based in history and religion, especially the ones we study with Islamist extremists. They are, as I said, widely known so they're not known by narrow segments of audiences but by everybody in a population, and they're often used in fragmentary form. So if you know a master narrative, or since you know a master narrative, to invoke it, I don't have to tell the whole story. I can give a reference to it and the associations come to your mind.

There are some of these in U.S. culture, one obviously is World War II, probably just showing you these images, those of you maybe especially my age or a little older can rapidly assemble the stories that go along with them. In more recent political discourse, we have the Tea Party. They don't call it the Tea Party for nothing, right? They, what they're trying to do is invoke the values of the American Revolution and the story of the Boston Tea Party in particular and all of the agenda that goes along with that, rejecting taxation without representation, freedom from tyranny and so forth.

In terms of fragmentary references, we have people running around Tea Party rallies in period uniforms. We have slogans from the American Revolutions. We have images from the American Revolution that they use, all again in this fragmentary sense of invoking that master narrative.

Okay, so back to the pictures I showed you before, what the five people have in common is that they're part of a master narrative of Islamist extremism that we call the Pharaoh. And the Pharaoh master narrative is based on a story from the Quran that's not too different from the story in the Old Testament of the Pharaoh in Egypt.

So the Cliff's Notes version of the story is as follows. Allah commands Musa, that's Moses, to confront the Pharaoh of Egypt. Moses does so. He says to the Pharaoh, "You think you're God but you're really not. You should repent and worship the one true God." Pharaoh says, "No, I'm the God around here. Get out of here." Events ensue, a contest between Moses and the Pharaoh's magicians, plagues and so forth. We fast-forward to the Exodus, where Moses strikes his staff on the sea. It parts. He and the Israelites go across and the Pharaoh and his troops follow. Then, Allah closes in the waters on the Egyptian troops, and in the Quranic version the Pharaoh is flailing in the water, about to drown. He repents at the last minute and he says, "Okay, God, I believe in you. I repent." God says, "Sorry, too late. You're going to drown, but what I'm going to do is cast your body onto the shore, preserved as a warning for future generations."

And though the Quran doesn't say who the Pharaoh of the Quran is—the, well, the Pharaoh in this story, it doesn't say which Pharaoh it is, many Muslims believe that it's Rameses II, whose body does indeed lie preserved as a warning to future generations in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. So basically this is a story you can use to brand a leader as a corrupt tyrant that deserves the wrath of God. So that's a set of stories from the Quran but we find this popping up a lot in more contemporary discourse.

You may recognize this as a picture of the—from the scene of the assassination of Anwar Sadat in 1991. The guy who led the group that did the assassination, Lieutenant Khalid al-Islambouli, was associated with a radical group called Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya, who had basically been trying to frame Sadat as a corrupt tyrant using the Pharaoh master narrative. And when Islambouli, al-Islambouli shot Sadat, he proclaimed, "I have killed the Pharaoh!" and he also repeated that claim at his trial.

We see this popping up again in other contemporary contexts. Several years ago we found this image on an extremist website, and what they have done is Photoshopped the head of Ariel Sharon onto a guy in an intensive care unit. Here we have, it says—well, it's not showing up on the white but here we have is says, "Sharon/Feron." "Feron" is a bastardization of the Arabic Firaun, which is Pharaoh. So in case you missed the point, they put that there for you. Also we have a picture of the mummy of Rameses II in the upper right-hand corner, and the Arabic text is a quote from the Quran, the one dealing with the sort of finale of the Pharaoh story. "This day We shall save thee in the body, that thou mayest be a sign to those who come after thee! But verily, many among mankind are heedless of Our Signs!" So here they're trying to cast Sharon as the Pharaoh.

Even more recently, in 2003, Osama bin-Laden accused President Bush of being the Pharaoh of our generation. We have seen this pop up in the Arab Spring protest in Egypt, so here's a guy saying Egypt is better without the Pharaoh. Who's the Pharaoh? It's Mubarak, as shown in the cartoon there.

Even outside of Middle East contexts, we have here a poster that circulated in Indonesia during President Obama's visit there, I think it was about a year and a half ago, depicting him as the Pharaoh. The same thing happened on his last visit to Indonesia, incidentally. And then we have Anwar al-Awlaki in 2009 saying that Obama is the Pharaoh of the age.

So in all these cases, we have the extremists invoking this Pharaoh master narrative in order to brand people as tyrants that deserve the wrath of God. So basically this, this is just a little diagram sort of showing the systemic nature of this. We have the various stories listed there on top. The story form behind the Pharaoh master narrative is conflict of God, where a mortal is punished for contempt of the immortal. It has archetypes like tyrants and deities, sometimes people acting as agents of the deities, and so that's how we would describe the system that's behind that narrative.

I've been talking a lot about systems. I just want to talk just for a couple of minutes about why a systems view is so important, because that's not a typical way to think of narratives. And the reason is because systems have important properties and if you miss them, you miss sort of interesting ways to think about what's going on in the strategic communication system.

So one property is emergence, and that's the idea that a system is greater than the sum of its parts, right? And so I have an example of that for you. I hope it's not too hard to read on the screen here. It's maybe a little hard, but basically what this is illustrating is a bunch of reports that the Taliban have been putting out for years about battles that take place in Afghanistan, and they have a similar form underlying them.

So in the first one, basically it's an attack by the Mujahideen against U.S. infidel soldiers, conducted with bombs, and they destroyed a bunch of our equipment and killed nine U.S. soldiers. In the second item, this time the invaders are Germans and the weapons are rocket-propelled grenades but still the same thing happens; they kill a bunch of the invaders. In the third example, there's a patrol of the U.S. colonial army again, this time attacked by the Mujahideen. It doesn't say what the weapons are in this case but in this case there's a little bit of a twist. One of the Mujahideen gets martyred in the operation.

So we've done an analysis of these and basically we think they share a common underlying story form which we are calling a victorious battle story. So archetypes there are the Mujahideen and martyrs, and the invaders that come to engage them, and there is almost a template by which these stories are written. The Mujahideen stage an attack, they deploy some sort of weapons, they kill invaders and destroy their equipment and the Mujahideen are occasionally martyred in the story. So that's what we would claim is a story form behind those.

So we've done an analysis that's forthcoming in *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* in the spring, where we analyzed one month's worth of these stories, and just to give you an idea of how they're pumping these things out, we found that the Taliban released 251 of these stories just in November of last year. They reported 563 deaths. We used independent data from iCasualties.org and the New York Times to decide whether we could verify those battles or not. We could verify only 22 of them and in a third of those, the casualties were inflated and a full 229 of them were not verifiable.

So the Taliban publish these reports and this website in Indonesia called arrahmah.com reposts some of them but not all of them, and we're not quite sure what selection criteria they use, but here is a place in Indonesia without an active insurgency where they're taking these Taliban stories and reproducing them, and they have sort of similar statistics in terms of the casualties.

According to the Taliban reports, ISAF is losing approximately a half-battalion a month in the Afghanistan conflict, so obviously we're not doing that so the question comes as to why they're spending so much time publishing these reports, especially arrahmah.com. That's sort of a major aspect of their website.

Well, the answer comes when they recently started referring to this, things going on in Afghanistan as the Badr Operation, and that's a reference to the Battle of Badr master narrative where the Muslims face and defeat an overwhelming force of pagans in 624. It's a deliverance story for them where a community is being attacked by some external force and a champion comes along to save them and basically the moral of the story, the Badr story, is that the weak can triumph over the mighty through strength of conviction and faith and divine intervention.

In the Badr story, God sent down his angels to the battlefield to fight alongside the Muslims. And so here again we have this idea that they're using a master narrative to contextualize these local stories and they're doing this we think, especially in Indonesia, to convince people there that this is a battle worth joining, that even though it's an inferior force, they're going to win because God is going to protect them. Even if you get killed on the battlefield, you're going to be martyred and enjoy the wages of martyrdom in heaven, and so we basically think it's an attempt to boost recruiting.

As illustrated in that last example, this gets to the integration idea, the second important thing I wanted to talk about, about systems of narratives, and that is that they form this system of vertical integration. That's David Betts's terms that we have adapted a little bit.

At the very top we have master narratives and those provide resources for local narratives. So they provide ways basically of framing local stories about what's going on, and those in turn can be used as a basis for personal narratives so people can project themselves into the local stories and basically play a role in them. And so what's strategic about this is the middle part.

Master narratives themselves aren't strategic, so Mohammed didn't tell the Pharaoh story or God didn't reveal it to him, depending on your belief, in order that somebody could go and shoot Anwar Sadat in 1981, right? So those stories grow by accretion over time. But what is strategic is taking the master narratives, using them to frame local events and trying to convince people to project themselves, their personal narratives into the local ones. And there couldn't be a better illustration of that than the example I talked about before of Lieutenant al-Islambouli. They had the Pharaoh narrative, Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya was using it to frame the actions of Sadat as Pharaoh-like. He basically cast himself into that local narrative and said, I'm going to be the guy that delivers God's vengeance on this tyrant.

So there's not just one master narrative. There are many, very often, and those form a rhetorical vision, and we've identified so far 18 master narratives of Islamist extremism, and I'm not going to take the time to go through them all but what I can share with you is some similarities they have. They're, of course we've found, we found them because they're regularly invoked in local narratives. They persuade individuals to align their personal narratives with the local ones, and they contain prominent story forms, and so these are actually the top three in the master narratives of Islamist extremism.

Deliverance is one, I've already talked about that. That's when a community is threatened by some threatener and a champion comes along to save them. The ruse is another one, so that's basically where somebody misleads the community for nefarious purposes. An invasion is a third one, where some belligerent foreign force comes in to conquer and they have to be defeated or repelled. And those basically make up the Islamist rhetorical vision.

And so if we put those all together, if we look overall at sort of what importance—what's important about the rhetorical vision, for one thing it contains a lot of unresolved narratives, so where there's the desire and the resolution is only projected. That is sort of an unfinished story that begs for somebody to come and insert themselves into the narrative to bring the resolution of the story. The overall vision is that it's a dangerous world for Islam. There are these impostors, internal enemies, and they all erode the strength of the worldwide Muslim community. There are barbarians at the gates in the forms of Crusaders and Tartars and so forth, and the Americans. The impostors collude with the external enemies to do bad things to the Ummah.

Even the Prophet was not immune to these kinds of influences, and so the stories have contained—continued unabated across history, and there's more to it than that but I think you get the idea. It's a dangerous world out there for Islam and somebody has to come along and be the champion.

We also find, incidentally, in a paper we're just completing that their use of Quran quotes in their texts do exactly the same thing. It's not the Verse of the Sword that everybody thinks is so important. It's the ones that talk about deliverance of Muslims from external threats.

So let me just take a minute to talk about the grant project where this work comes from. This is funded by the Office of Naval Research under the Human Social, Cultural and Behavior Modeling Program.¹ Ivy Estabrooke is the program officer and it's going to be a six-year project right now. So what we're doing, and basically how we came up with the master narratives is we're collecting all of these extremist texts. We're analyzing stories that they contain and basically trying to place them into that vertical integration model and then also develop tools to track change over time and space. So we've collected a lot of texts. I won't take the time to go into it here but we're looking at the Middle East, Southeast Asia, North Africa, Southern Europe, East Africa and some other regions as well.

We've, at least with the master narrative stuff, we've gotten busy with some of the spatial analysis. So this for example shows co-mentions of master narratives in cities in the extremist texts overlaid with terrorist events from the Maryland Terrorist Database, and as you can see from the diagram there, there's a pretty good correlation between their mention of cities in the context of these master narratives and places where terrorist events happen.

We've identified some examples of change over time, so the two countries there show a shift in the geographic mean center—that's a concept from geographic information systems—a shift of the geographic main center of terrorist incidents basically from Iraq over to Afghanistan. This is from 2005 to 2010 and it's accompanied by a fairly consistent shift eastward as well in

¹ <http://www.onr.navy.mil/en/Science-Technology/Departments/Code-30/All-Programs/Human-Behavioral-Sciences.aspx>

the geographic mean center of these co-mentions of master narratives and cities. So the stories are sort of moving along with the conflicts you could say.

So if you'd like to know more about the project, I'd be happy to tell you about it, but for now let me move on to the idea of countering narratives, counter-narrative principles.

Number one principle is avoid reinforcement. So the patch on the left, you can buy that on the internet for about eight bucks, and I have confirmed reports that active duty military personnel in the American and Danish armies are wearing this patch on their uniforms in Muslim countries. And so it says on the top "Pork-Eating Crusader". If you don't speak English, it's written in Arabic on the bottom for you. It shows a guy with a cross, a red cross on his chest eating—it looks more like a turkey leg to me but presumably it's pork.

So, now I understand. I mean some people, members of the military have told me look, you've got to understand the importance of talismans and maintaining esprit de corps in the military and so forth, and I understand that, it's all well and good, but the problem is our military personnel are running around Muslim with a sign on their uniform that says, "I am a Crusader." That plays directly into the Crusader master narrative that's number three in terms of use of master narratives by the Islamist extremists.

Also, over on the right, you might remember this from a few years ago. It was discovered that the—a manufacturer of gun sights for the American military, I think they were up in Michigan, were embedding some strange symbols in the serial numbers of the parts, and it was discovered that those are Bible quotes. And so the Bible quote there is from John 8:12, which says, "Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying 'I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in darkness, but shall have the Light of life.'"

So not only do we have uniforms with Crusader signs on them but we have people running around with weapons inscribed with Bible quotes. Incidentally, it turns out that members of the Afghan military were using those gun sights on weapons that were used, being used for training over there, so it was a big brouhaha and you know, rightly so.

So again, we have this reinforcement of the Crusader narrative. Of course there's the famous George W. Bush quote in 2001 that we were on a crusade. Of course he didn't mean it that way, he meant it in the vernacular sense of sort of a concerted effort, but foreign audiences didn't understand that.

Corruption in government, corruption in Muslim governments also reinforces master narratives like the hypocrite and Pharaoh archetypes and so forth. So the number one way to engage in counter-narrative is to not reinforce the narratives, and that would seem kind of obvious. Secondly, you can contest analogies. So since we're taking—or the extremists take these master narratives and try to use them as templates for local narratives, there's an implied analogy in doing that. So you have to draw a similarity between the ancient or historical situation and the present one, and I'm not going to go through all these examples here but depending on your goals, if you want to try to dispute their analogy or not, and substitute one or your own or not, there are sort of known techniques for trying to do this, represented in the diagram there.

So for example a false analogy on the Crusades, you can challenge the underlying validity of the analogy. The Crusades were launched by European Catholics. Today the people in the Middle East are secular nations officially. The Crusaders were promised forgiveness of sins, US soldiers are not; and the Crusades captured and attempted to hold land, and we are today leaving Iraq. We're in the process of leaving Afghanistan. So all of those things tend to challenge the idea that we're there on a crusade. That's just a brief example. There's more to it than that but the idea is that you can take these analogies that the local narratives are based on and try to undermine them.

A third way of engaging in counter-narrative is to try to decompress time, and the idea here is that extremists depend on the maintenance of sort of an enclave culture that perceives itself as continually under attack from forces from the outside. In order to do this, you basically have to take the past and compress it. You have to reduce it to a few key points in time and prune away all the other events that don't support this idea of an enclave culture. They don't fit the narrative basically.

One strategy is to put back the inconvenient details from history. An example of that, again in the Crusader context, is that in the Crusader master narrative, Saladin is basically the archetypal champion in that story, but he didn't lead the Muslims in a clash of civilizations—I'll have more to say about that in a second—but in fact he was allied with the Byzantine Christians against the Catholics and Seljuk Turks. He was also an Asherite, which is a sect that modern extremists consider to be heretical.

All of those details of the Crusades sort of tend to undermine this compression of time and also, at the same time, challenge the analogy it's based on.

The fourth principle is to try to deconstruct binaries. So extremists rely on binary opposition, so one of their master narratives for example is the Battle of Karbala. That's a Shia master narrative and that's clearly a battle between good and evil. So to make that apply, you have to maintain this binary opposition between the good and evil sides.

But the thing about binaries is that they tend to obscure similarities between the things being compared that are also inconvenient details. So the map here is Samuel Huntington's idea of the civilizations that are going to be in clash from clash of civilization—Clash of Civilizations.

Basically the world is this set of homogeneous boxes that inherently conflict with one another and that the conflicts of the future are going to be based on conflicts between these different civilizations, and the extremist rhetorical vision has the exact same idea of this cosmic conflict between sort of large religious forces.

So, but you can question something like that by questioning the basis for the distinctions. So for one thing, just to draw a set of boxes like that sort of goes against the reality of the situation. So we have the Muslim world there in the other I guess it is, on the screen, but those aren't only Muslims in those countries.

For example Jordan is in there. There are a lot of Christians in Jordan. Also the countries outside the box have substantial Muslim populations so it's not exactly clear why you should call just those countries the Muslim countries. They're a quarter of the world's population is

Muslim. They're spread all over the place, so we can question that. Also, sort of setting up the opposition between the Muslim countries and the ones in red there, the United States and Europe and Australia, those are Christian and Jewish lands but Christian and Jews are people of the Book in the Quran and they're accorded special status in Islam. So we can question that as well.

Also just the idea that war and peace are incompatible. We think that President Obama did a good job in his Nobel speech of 2010 in rejecting the war and peace binary, right, that you can have war but that, throughout history you've always had it and that's always led to peace so just because you have one doesn't mean you can't have the other. So those are some ideas of how you can, you know, question the binaries that the extremists rely on.

And then finally, a counter-narrative strategy is to try to recast archetypes. So as I mentioned, these are standard characters in the stories that the extremists use, and what you can try to do is recast the actors in those stories into different archetypes. So for example—or talk about the fact that they're unsuitable for the archetype that they're trying to inhabit. So this is a graph, graphic from the latest United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan report on civilian casualties. To their credit, they've been producing these every six months for the last two or three years and they consistently show that the most deaths are produced by the counter-government forces not by ISAF and the pro-government forces.

This, I think it was about two-thirds in the past, it's even more in this report that are contained by the—that are produced by the anti-government forces. So it's the Taliban and their allies that are doing most of the killing of Muslims in Afghanistan. Yet they present themselves as some sort of champions that are going to save the Ummah from all these external threats. What kind of champion goes around killing 8 out of 10 Muslims in a conflict?

And we might also ask exactly what have these people accomplished for Muslims in the last ten years they've been fighting their Jihad. Have they reclaimed any countries? No. Have they gotten rid of any apostate rulers? No, just regular people in the Arab Spring did that, that basically had nothing to do with their ideology. So exactly what sort of champions are these guys?

Another thing you can do is try to reframe the nature of the archetype. So the guy in the picture here is Abdul Ghaffar Khan. He was an ethnic Pashtun and a student of Gandhi and a contemporary of Gandhi and he is known as the Frontier Gandhi. And he operated in the Pakistan/Afghanistan area during British colonialism and basically used nonviolent tactics to resist colonial rule. And he worked to improve the lives of people in that region as well, and founded a group called the Khudai Khidmatgar, which is Urdu I think for “Servants of God”, which was a 100,000-strong nonviolent army that followed this guy and participated in his efforts to resist colonialism. And so as I mentioned, they were nonviolent and they were also ethnic Pashtun so they had to give up certain Pashtun traditions such as revenge killings. They had to take an oath to do this when they joined this guy's army. So he was sort of a hero in that part of the world. He died though in the mid-80s I think, and today practically nobody knows about him. But here's a real champion, right, that actually accomplished something in terms of shortening colonial rule there, and did so using nonviolent methods. He wasn't conducting jihad or using suicide bombers or anything like that. So here is a different way to be a champion and still try to accomplish the same sort of goals.

I had a video we did of this guy as an example of how we would, you know, try to promote the story of this guy on social media but it didn't work out with the technology here. If any of you are interested in seeing it, I have it on my laptop there. So, oh, there it is. Is it going to play? We don't have any sound though, huh? Do we have sound? No sound. Okay, we'll just skip that. So with that, let me thank you.

As Matt mentioned, a lot of the stuff I talked about today in master narratives is in a book that came out this year called Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism. I think that would make a wonderful gift for all your family and friends, and so if you, if you'd like to get it, it's available at Amazon.com. You can also visit our website, comops.org. There is a page, a special subsection of the site describing the book. There's a sample chapter on the Pharaoh master narrative in there. So with that, I thank you very much.

QUESTION: Can you take any questions?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Sure.

QUESTION: Okay. Islamic extremists (inaudible) out there, and how are we counter—how are we getting back to their message.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Yes.

QUESTION: And I know they do it through press releases or whatever.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Right.

QUESTION: However they do it but generally how do they get it out there and how do we combat that?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: So as far as how they get it out there, very often—well, for a long time it was in videos, right, that were released and broadcast on Arab satellite networks. They also do it through CDs that are sold in bazaars and street markets in the Middle East, so they'll put those videos on a CD and you can buy it for 50 cents or something like that. They have these guys that—it's As-Sahab Media and basically it's a guy with a laptop that shoots video. It's combat camera, for those of you in the military, and they produce these videos, burn it onto the CDs and go out and sell it. It also happens through sermons in mosques, face-to-face contact and so forth. So that's how they do it.

As far as how we're countering it, you know, I think we're trying to do it through traditional means, so public diplomacy, so trying to put our own stories out there. One thing I know the State Department is doing is the Digital Outreach Team, so they have folks that are native language speakers that get, go to the extremist forums and when they find people saying things on there that they think are not true, they try to correct the information. So various efforts like that.

The problem is, it's an asymmetry because essentially the extremists have access to this rhetorical vision that a lot of their audience share, and they can use it and we can't use it very much, so it's a bit of situation with being reactive I'm afraid, yes.

QUESTION: Does (inaudible) maybe I'm just an idiot, but one principle is that narrative has the power to make people behave differently.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Yes.

QUESTION: And I don't know if you stated that directly. The question is: when does narrative not work in motivating those behaviors?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Well, according to Fisher it would be when it is incoherent or doesn't have fidelity, right? So it's when it doesn't sort of ring true with present circumstances or so, you know an example of it...

QUESTION: But has anyone done the research on populations receiving the same narrative but choosing not to follow the extremist path?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Not to my knowledge.

QUESTION: Okay, and then I just, another question that I wondered was in your—in terms of binary visions. Isn't there something also unsaid that the U.S., by blanketing the area with its own presence and armies, is suffocating a lot of the regional strife that would naturally occur and would offer sort of counter-narratives to explode naturally, you know?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Yes, yes I mean there—there's no doubt about that, that you know, we suppress conflict that would otherwise occur. That's a tough policy question. You know, I don't, it's a hard call to say whether it would be better to just leave and let them fight it out.

You know, part of the problem is when the social structures break down in the area like that, that's when these guys have an opportunity to sort of work their magic and move in and take over, and that's what we saw with the Taliban after the Soviet invasion.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Steven, thanks...

QUESTION: A small question.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Oh.

QUESTION: Go ahead.

QUESTION: You said the United States military.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Yes.

QUESTION: Is there some group?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: The soldiers themselves do it so, and somebody correct me if I'm wrong here, maybe Cliff...

CLIFF GILMORE: (Inaudible).

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Maybe Cliff knows about it but they're allowed to put whatever patches they want I think on the left shoulder. Is that right?

CLIFF GILMORE: Yes, and to a degree this does come down to a fundamental leadership question.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Yes.

CLIFF GILMORE: It is not institutionalized.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Right, right, right.

CLIFF GILMORE: There is no formal...

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: I didn't mean to claim that.

CLIFF GILMORE: Hey, this unit is, you know, this pork-eating infidel but what you have is the leadership challenge of individual service members who are dealing with, in my opinion, dealing with many of the stresses and the realities of the conflict, of the narrative that's going on who, you know, to a degree at some point come back and say, "Oh really? Fine. I'm a U.S. Marine and my motto is Semper Fidelis so let me just go be semper and fidelis, how about that?" and it's sort of a reaction to frustration of dealing with these things.

In terms of the institutionalization of it though, that is not going on, but it does happen that the Army in particular, they're real big on Velcro and you know, they have Velcro patches all over their uniform and yes, you know, there's nothing to prevent them from ordering that thing up and slapping it on their arm if they wanted to other than good quality leadership.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Yes, and I didn't mean to imply that it was institutional. This is individual soldiers that are doing it.

COMMANDER JONATHAN WORTHINGTON: I would endorse what—sorry, Jonathan Worthington, Royal Navy. I would endorse what my friend Cliff had to say. I too have told servicemen to remove rather unsavory t-shirts purporting to be the world's number one infidel and things like that that were being sold unofficially and things. It goes on, but it is ultimately, it's a leadership thing. You have to tell people to (desist?).

I wanted to thank you for a very illuminating presentation and for bringing such clarity to what is a very complex issue, the issue I thought of countering narratives was probably the most useful part and there's some very good, practical stuff there. There is one other principle I think that you could add to that, although it probably might seem self-evident to everybody here, and that is speed in countering the other narrative.

So often, the Taliban have got their story out and round the world before we've got our boots on, and then once the story out—is out there, it may be untrue but it's very, very difficult to shift it. So we need to get much more slick at that and empower our messaging people with more sense of sort of a mission command.

Just one other little point if I may. It strikes me that with all these various insurgent groups, they have wonderful amounts of physical maneuver space but very little ideological maneuver space. Ironically this, their greatest source of power, is also their source of weakness and something we ought to be far more adept at challenging, especially when they commit atrocities, especially when you find a nexus between drugs, marketing drugs and what they're doing and other such things. And sometimes I feel that we've been very, very reluctant to do that.

There's this sort of contradiction between wanting to allow a door open for reconciliation and not wanting to cast them all as devils or vilify them too much, and sometimes I feel that the desire for reconciliation is probably a little early in the game. Thank you.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: So thank you for those points. So to the first one, a good example of that is these UNAMA reports like I showed you. Those come out every six months. Well, by that time we have five times six, we've got 3,000 reports by the Taliban that have come out in the meantime.

One of the things we recommend in the paper I mention is that ISAF set up some sort of similar mechanism to put out their own battle casualty reports, do it on an ongoing basis, not every six months, and maybe not directly engage the Taliban websites but essentially do it through similar formats, similar channels and let the information be out there for people to compare because one thing is, a lot of these reports come from some guy sitting on a hill, you know, a mile away and they see an attack down there and said oh, killed all the Crusaders and blew up their tanks. Well, he couldn't see that they weren't tanks because we didn't have tanks there until a couple of years ago or something like that. He doesn't know if some of the people who were hit were saved by, you know, emergency response personnel and so forth. So that's an example of being more responsive.

Just to the point about ideological maneuvering space, another thing is that you know, the Islamists thrive on abstractions and there's hardly a better abstraction of that than saying we want to institute Sharia law. Sharia is not a set of law books on a shelf somewhere, you know, like the U.S. Revised Statutes that you can pull off and refer to. They're interpretations from the Quran and Hadith and so forth, and they're traditions that have built up over the years. different groups have different interpretations, traditions and so forth so very often when these guys get in power and try to establish Sharia law, that's when the trouble starts because then your idea of Sharia law isn't the same as mine, and people get frustrated and react badly to these guys. So that's a very good point as well.

QUESTION: Steve, if I understood what you were saying correctly, it sounds like you're (compiling?) an inventory of master narratives.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: We're trying. I mean we're not going to say we have an inventory because they're just ones that we've found from the texts we've collected. So there could be more and you know, also there's no magic line something crosses in terms of being a master narrative. It's a little bit of a fuzzy concept.

QUESTION: Sure.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: But when you, sort of a key thing is this fragmentary use of it because you know then if somebody's doing that, they're appealing to broad knowledge that they think some group has.

QUESTION: So my follow-on question is: are you seeing (inaudible)?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Well, so one thing is that there are some that are almost exclusively Shia like the Battle of Karbala is an example of that, and the Mahdi and so forth. So those are particularly focused on Shia groups. The rest of them are shared to some extent by Sunni and Shia but they're largely Sunni narratives, and as far as the diversity of them, kind of one of the things the geospatial analysis is showing is it sort of depends on what area you're focusing on.

So there tends to be a very large diversity of them in the Afghanistan/Pakistan region for example but less diversity in North Africa for example. So for some reason that we don't understand yet, they're focusing on particular ones in North Africa. Maybe they're trying to play up the Crusader master narrative there, but then when you get over into South Asia, there tends to be a greater diversity of them and that's one of the sort of interesting things we've found that we haven't had a chance to unpack yet but that's essentially why we're doing the analysis, you know, to figure out if there are interesting regularities here and kind of what might explain them.

QUESTION: Steven, a question related to—a follow-up. So collecting these master narratives and creating these (inaudible).

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Right.

QUESTION: You focused this morning on (inaudible).

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Right.

QUESTION: Have you looked at (inaudible) building nationalism, let's say China?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Yes.

QUESTION: And is that part of your effort?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: We have not, and it's not part of our effort now so by design, the proposal was focused on Islamist extremists but there's really no reason the very same techniques couldn't be applied in other contexts like China for example. And as far as the role of songs and poems and things like that, the answer there is again no because it's a matter of access to data for us. So we don't, we've got one Arabic speaker on our team. We're mostly relying on translations for the analyses we're doing, but those are important things too and Tom Johnson at the Naval Postgraduate School has done quite a bit with poetry and these night letters that the Taliban deliver and so forth, and he's done a lot of work in that area too so that's also a great place to look. Matt?

MATT ARMSTRONG: Steve, hello? Ah, there we go.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: There he is.

MATT ARMSTRONG: First, Rear Admiral Hal Pittman, who's over at ISAF right now in Afghanistan wanted to participate today.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Oh.

MATT ARMSTRONG: We were unable to fit in his Skype into the conversation very well but what I will do is, well, I'll just send him a note, to get in line and see if he's available at this time but what I'll do is I'll throw these ideas that you've put out over to him.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Okay.

MATT ARMSTRONG: And maybe we can have, continue some of that dialogue online and...

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Sure. Yes, we'd be happy to send him a draft of that paper on the ISAF casualties. It might interest him.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Okay, great. I'm sure he would be happy to see it. Here's a question from the online community from Alan Kelly. "Is narrative mistaken for driving consensus? It seems to me that it is an equally powerful vehicle for driving debate—by which an agenda may be proved."

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Driving debate. Sure. So I mean the whole point of it, right, is to develop consensus among people, you know. Sort of going back to the narrative paradigm, it's to get them to frame a situation in a particular way and interpret events in the way that the extremists want it interpreted. So for sure it's important in developing consensus. It can also drive debate too, so maybe there are alternative narratives that can be applied to extremists. So one thing that we've seen, for example from a couple of religious scholars is, I think the latest was in Saudi Arabia. I may not be remembering that right, but they are equating the extremists with Kharijites, which is a sect of Islam back from ancient times who had a falling-out with the last Rightly Guided Caliph, Ali. They killed him during prayers in a mosque by stabbing him with a poisoned sword. It wasn't enough to just use a sword; they had to put poison on it too just to make sure. And so this guy is actually thought to be buried in a mosque in Afghanistan, and it's something from—of a pilgrimage site for Afghans, and I can't remember the name of the city it's in unfortunately right now. So there's an example of somebody sort of trying to use a different narrative, this narrative of the Kharijites, the people who basically invented Takfir, which is the principle of branding somebody an unworthy Muslim or an infidel Muslim and allowing them to be killed. So there's an example in terms of debate that can take place in the narrative domain. So they're not champions; they're Kharijites.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Hey Anne, can we hold until you get a microphone because it will be on the transcription if you hold off?

ANNE WEDNER: Just thinking about threats down the road and what your research might help or elucidate, and I don't know if it can, and that is sort of the jumping of these terror or extremist groups functioning with groups that don't seem like they would be naturally aligned. So the example that I have is the Iranians working with the Mexican drug cartels.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Yes.

ANNE WEDNER: And how do you use narrative, or how are they using narrative in that case?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: I don't know the answer to that question but that's a good, that's a good question. It would be a fascinating thing to research, so I don't know if the relationship is just one of convenience, so I understand the Iranians have been training some of the drug cartels in military tactics. You know, I don't know if they're doing that for money or if there's some narrative basis there. It's a little hard to know what it would be given the difference between the religious traditions, but it would certainly be a fascinating thing to look at. And in Arizona obviously we're sort of worried about that, yes.

QUESTION: Dr. Corman, I find what you're doing fascinating.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Well, thank you.

QUESTION: Just fascinating, and I'm sure many of us do here. Have you been able to coordinate and work with the State Department or Defense Department in what you're doing here? Is there some kind of blending or something going on there to work with them?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Yes, so just a week ago I briefed Todd Leventhal's group, the Counterterrorism Strategic Communication Coordination Committee or something. It's CSCC. I'm not completely sure what the acronym is.

MATT ARMSTRONG: The head of CSCC is here. He's going to be on the second panel.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Oh, thank you. Sorry about that, sir. Maybe you can straighten us out on the actual name but I did brief the group...

MATT ARMSTRONG: We'll have to ask the Ambassador.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: Oh okay, so I did brief the group about a week ago, and we're going to work with them on two things. One, a question came in from the Embassy in Madrid about whether there are master narratives of Islamists that are—of Muslims I should say, of Islam—that don't comport with the extremists' master narratives, in other words that could be invoked as an alternative to what they're trying to provide, or that would pressure them somehow. So we're going to take a look at that.

Another thing is I guess the Digital Outreach Teams have been running across this War on Islam narrative quite a bit in their workings and so we're going to take a look at that. So we have been working with them a little bit recently.

Also we've been doing quite a few things with the Department of Defense, so we were out to Stuttgart last summer to talk to European Command about applying some of these ideas to their work. In particular we did a white paper on this Hungarian fascist group called the Jobbik who basically want to take back the historical borders of Hungary and ethnically cleanse the Roma and so forth, so we did sort of an analysis of their master narratives. We put in a brief proposal with them to, oh, USDI looking at the NATO narrative, which is a sort of growing problem in Europe that you have all these NATO member countries that don't have the same reasons for being in the alliance or helping out in Afghanistan, and there's some worry that the sort of NATO narrative is disintegrating.

So we've been working with them and also with AFRICOM, who is looking at a Boy Scout Merit Badge program of all things in Tunisia and they want to assess the effect, and that's joint with the State Department and they want to assess basically the effect of this in terms of, you know, building good governance and democracy and so forth in Tunisia. So you know, we've been doing some work with external groups.

MATT ARMSTRONG: We have time for one more question. All right, Steve, thanks. Thank you very much.

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: You are welcome.

MATT ARMSTRONG: So Steve, thank you very much. Thanks again. I hope that was useful. We're going to take a fifteen-minute break. We're back on schedule. CSCC Ambassador LeBaron, I don't know, Steve, have you met Ambassador LeBaron?

DR. STEVEN CORMAN: No.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Okay. So Ambassador LeBaron will be on the second panel. So right now, Lance, can we put the agenda back up real quick just so you can see because it's slightly different from the hard copy that you have only in the morning time shift, fifteen-minute shift. That's not it. So anyway, take a fifteen-minute break. There are refreshments out in the hallway. Socialize, talk to Steve, talk to whomever, take a break and then we will reconvene here at 10.45, so you actually have slightly more than fifteen minutes. Thank you.

Panel 1

MATT ARMSTRONG: (in progress) ... turn this over to our first panel. Cliff Gilmore, Lt. Col. U.S. Marines, he's the Senior Military Advisor to the Advisory Commission. I'm very happy and thankful as well that he's working with me and on board the Commission, and he's been a tremendous asset to the Commission. So with that, I'll turn it over to Cliff and turn it over to the first panel. Thank you.

CLIFF GILMORE: Well, good morning and thanks for being here. Not a whole lot of room to tell you about me. I'm just here to moderate, so I'll do that. But what I will start with is introductions. And keeping in mind that theme of diverse conversations, we have a pretty good collection of folks here from the academic side of the world. Dr. Nick Cull is a Professor of Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California, where he directs the world's first Masters Program in Public Diplomacy. He's a historian by training, but he's also widely published on topics about past and present public diplomacy and propaganda. And his recent publications include *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy*. Next speaker, Mr. Barry Sanders, is an adjunct professor of Communications Studies at UCLA, the author of the recent book, *American Avatar*, which is available on the table outside, I saw. Barry's also an international corporate lawyer and President of the Board of Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks. And a fascinating discussion last night about your interaction there, we'll keep that out. Dalia Dassa Kaye is a Senior Political Scientist here at RAND and currently a Visiting Professor and Fellow at the UCLA International Institute and Burkle Center. Dalia has published widely on a range of Middle East security issues, including Iran and regional security dynamics, political reform, U.S. diplomacy in the region, and the Arab-Israeli peace process. Additionally, she led a RAND project exploring the challenges artists face in the region and co-authored the resulting study, *Barriers to the Broad Dissemination of Creative Works in the Arab World*, and brings a terrific perspective tied into one of the other questions from earlier about the role of arts in narrative.

And finally we have Philip J. Crowley. P.J. Crowley is the Omar Bradley Chair of Strategic Leadership at Dickinson College, the Penn State Dickinson School of Law and School of International Affairs, and the Army War College. He's also a Fellow at the George Washington University Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication, and he was the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and Spokesman at the Department of State until March 2011. He served as the primary U.S. Government interlocutor—you're not going to get a word

like that from a Marine, come on. One of our generals said the word "eviscerate" several years ago, and it knocked people for a loop. But interlocutor, yes—I'll work on that one at home—with major media regarding the release of classified cables by WikiLeaks. He is also a retired Air Force colonel and a special assistant to President Bill Clinton on the National Security Council staff at the White House. With that, we now have the panel, and we'll kick it off with Dr. Cull. You have ten minutes, and I have the shepherd's crook.

Dr. NICHOLAS CULL: Thank you. Hello. Thanks very much, Cliff, and thanks to the Commission and especially to Matt Armstrong for setting this up. And I'm so pleased to see all the things the Commission is doing now and how vibrant that important organization is becoming.

I want to begin by just responding to what Steve said. Steve and I have been on many panels together over the years, many of the same conferences. And I'm always so impressed by the rigor that he brings to this important subject and the way in which he's mapped it out and made it understandable but is also doing the heavy lifting to generate the insights that we need. And I think it's so important, this whole narrative approach, and that's why I'm glad to be a part of a discussion.

At USC, where I direct the Masters Program in Public Diplomacy and a substantial portion of the first year of the Masters Program—some second years are here in the audience today, so I'm so glad you're here—but the first lesson the students get is that public diplomacy is not about speaking or not solely about speaking, that public diplomacy begins with listening. And to me the importance of what Steve was laying out was a whole methodology for listening or for creating a structure to set over the top of your listening and analytical structure into which you can slot the pieces of information that you're picking up through your listening. America's public diplomacy, everyone's public diplomacy need to listen more. But one of the things we plainly need to listen for is for these master narratives and for elements within the local communication that play into those master narratives.

It's not enough just to listen to the Middle East, just to listen to the Islamic world and its master narratives because the challenge for the United States is that everybody has master narratives. And in the future, other master narratives are going to be more significant than the Islamic master narratives. And one of the problems facing the United States right now is that it has become totally focused on the Middle East to the exclusion of other areas of the world and has taken its eye off the ball. We also need to understand the narratives that are circulating in Latin America, the narratives that Hugo Chávez is able to play into just as adeptly as the leaders of al-Qaeda. We need to understand the narratives in China. We need to understand the narratives in Russia. We need to understand the narratives in Europe because there's a whole set of narratives into which the United States inadvertently plays through clumsy communication and clumsy policy that do an awful lot of damage, needless damage to America's reputation in the world.

Cliff asked in advance of this panel if we could say a little bit about why narrative is important to each of us in our scholarship and our work. And to step back and say why it's important to me, I see narrative as increasingly central to public diplomacy really because of the changes that have happened in the world in the last 20 years.

State communicators have much less control over the information environment than they had during the Cold War era. In the Cold War era, only a few communicators had the ability to communicate to everyone at any one time. And the great mountains of communication were in Moscow and in Washington, and all the people of the world were gathered around the base of those mountains, listening to the information that came out from those centers and sort of trickled down. Communication seemed to run vertically. Today there are many, many entities, agencies, even individuals in the world capable of putting out messages that reach everyone simultaneously or messages that have the power to reach and to motivate. And that information is spreading horizontally.

When we think about a networked society, we have to think not only about the communication lines through which information is passed, but we have to think about what transformation has to happen for our communication to succeed on that network.

I like to think of it as like a sort of a spider's web. And you think, well, if I'm going to put out a story or encounter a story, that story will be like a little creature. Analysts of the Web call that a meme, a piece of information, a cultural form that is released into a culture and will spread out, will pass from person to person, will be reproduced. If it's really successful, it could become like a little organism, having multiple children, creating generations, reproducing, reproducing, spreading out and becoming a major feature of a communications network.

So as communicators, we have to think of our communication as being about generating a successful communication form, a meme, a story that will run and run and run, will go as far as it can. And we have to understand that, when we communicate, we have to aim to create something that will have that life of its own. But we also have to understand that what we're going up against are stories that other people have crafted to fit in with the master narratives that will enable their memes to go further, to bite deeper, to cause us even more problems.

So once we have this framework around what we're doing, it reinforces some sound lessons of good practice that we need to make sure that we're accentuating the positive. We have to make sure that we are intercepting the stories that have the potential to go bad. And also I think that Jonathan's point about speed is terribly important in this networked world. The next thing that I wanted to say is that we have to understand where narratives live.

They don't live out in the ether but that narratives are internal to people and are tremendously important structural parts of a person's existence. And the images that we hold of other countries, of other people, of our world take a long, long time to be constructed. And we don't let go of them in an instant. And we need to understand, and part of the listening process is to understand the images that other people have of us. And sometimes our positive images can be a problem, and the positive narratives people have about us are a problem. And I think you see this particularly in Europe during the entirety, I would say, of the Bush Administration. And let me talk you through it like this.

The United States over 200 years of its existence have done an excellent job of building in European minds the idea that this country was the place where law and order were important, where individual rights were important, where liberty was realized and democracy had reached an unprecedented height. And people in Europe understood that, and that was, even if they were irritated by things America did, they understood that that was part of America's identity.

When things then happen that challenge that narrative, when the United States makes choices like the choice to ship people off to secret interrogation camps or institutions where torture is used in Afghanistan or in Eastern Europe, when you have abuse of prisoners happening in Abu Ghraib, when you have things happening like the creation of the camp in Guantanamo, which is legal black hole, and America is saying, oh yes, we believe in law, but oh look, there's a little gap in the law where laws don't apply, so let's take advantage of this, when that happens, it isn't like another country doing that.

When America tortures people, it hurts and the United States is judged by that in a way which, if Russia tortured people, people wouldn't mind so much because torture is part of the image that people have of Russia. We expect Russians to play rough. The United States is held to a higher standard because that is the narrative that has been transmitted and that is the narrative that has been accepted. It isn't fair on the United States. It's totally unfair. But the reality is that, because the narrative exists inside the person, when the United States steps outside its own narrative, negates it, or introduces a dissonant note within its own narrative that is happening inside the mind of the audience.

It's as if Donald Rumsfeld had personally reached into the mind of hundreds of millions of Europeans and tweaked some part of the frontal lobe where the narrative lives. And no wonder there was a great shock, a great revulsion against that.

CLIFF GILMORE: at this point I'll...

Dr. NICHOLAS CULL: I'm sure I'll come back later.

CLIFF GILMORE: ...reach out and tweak your mind to control (inaudible).

Dr. NICHOLAS CULL: Yes,

CLIFF GILMORE: Thanks very much for your remarks.

BARRY SANDERS: Well, it's a pleasure for me too to be before this group here and to be able to speak to the Commission and also the folks here at RAND. The old saw of everything that could be said has been said but not everyone has said it has never been used this early in a program. After two speakers, I'm certainly about to embark on remarks that are either or both obviated and redundant, but I will carry on anyway. The question of narrative has been this sort of focus du jour for so many jours among semioticians and literary critics and other people whom I don't generally read, but it's nice to be able to talk with you about a sort of common sense approach to these important questions. As Dr. Corman said or a slight variation on what he said, a narrative is a sequence of related ideas not necessarily in chronologic order and not necessarily about events but often both of those. And they're terribly important. I'm a lawyer. Every law student is taught by case studies. They're narratives. That's how you learn them. If you want to win an argument, tell a story. If you want to say something people will remember, tell a story. If you want to say something interesting, tell a story. If you want to get people to join your group, tell them a story, especially a story about the group's founding. I mean stories are memorable. Stories are persuasive. Stories are interesting. And there's an enormous human thirst for narratives. It's amazing too how this thirst seems to be inexhaustible. We're not just sitting there around the fire anymore, hearing a Homeric story passed on from the grandfather. If you to go 300 cable channels, everywhere there is some sort of narrative being played out before

you. Maybe Hollywood's right that there's only really 14 stories, but they're told in 14 million different ways, and people spend whole days consuming narratives. They seem to have an inexhaustible need.

So it's a testimony to the power of it. Even the computer games that people play are essentially narratives. And now we have, and we have to adjust to it in the work that this Commission and that our government does, we have the interactive narrative, the narrative where people put their own endings in, which makes this a truly triple game of chess to play. So the subject is interesting. And I wrote a book recently that you were kind enough to mention, *American Avatar*, and it's about how people form their ideas about the United States. Well, if you see an idea or an image as a photo, a narrative is movie. And that's why it's so powerful, and not only powerful, but it's sticky. You can't just remove this or that photo from the movie and still have the movie because of the issue of coherence that Dr. Corman mentioned.

You can't start saying that Goldilocks was mean without getting rid of the rest of the story, somehow changing the rest of the story. People won't accept it. And you can't say that Snow White was a streetwalker. People aren't going to accept it. I mean there are Broadway shows like *Wicked*, that maybe there's a method to do this, but it's not easy. So the beauty of a narrative is it takes the ideas and it locks them in. And the human mind seems to have this endless need to get these narratives. The most effective ways too are narratives that don't just have the ideas laid out in them, but they're parables or allegories.

Narratives have this tremendous ability to multiply themselves by the bootstrap of other ideas that are referenced in them. And, of course, they also not only lock in ideas, but they play a great role in group cohesion. Having everybody in the group accept the same narrative is almost the definition of the group. And people aren't necessarily keyed in when they join the group into the truth of the narrative. The narrative has to be something that works for them. So when Nick Cull talks about the audience, it's their needs that are being satisfied by the narrative. We can't be just asking what story we want to tell. We need to be asking what story they want to hear. If you look at the narrative in France about the French Resistance during World War II, it flew up until recently in the face of everything they knew was true. Every Frenchman was a Resistance fighter. Well, it wasn't so and they knew it wasn't so. It didn't matter. An absolutely irreversible, irreversible narrative until recently when something happened; and people can begin over time maybe and with new facts to begin to penetrate and adjust it. The importance of narratives and parables and allegories in particular is clear in the scriptures.

Think of all the major religions with some constantly repetitive narratives. The flood story: so many religions with flood stories. So many religions with going to the mountaintop: the Zoroastrians, Judaism, Islam, Mormonism. There seem to be particular stories that the human mind latches onto particularly when it comes to founding myths, the kinds of things that draw a group together. We require this sort of thing. If you want to become a naturalized citizen, you have to have a rudimentary knowledge of our Constitution. It's the founding myth. You need to have it. Other societies have their own. There's Mao's Red Book, there's Gaddafi's Green Book. The first thing the Libyans did last month, the new government, was collect all the history books in the schools. If you're going to build group cohesion, if you're going to build a new myth, you have to get rid of the history. And so the new government, the government of

which we approve, gathered up the history books. There's going to have to be a new one. It's still not easy. If you've got an existing narrative, it's very hard because of the cohesion, this Snow White problem I mentioned, to shift it.

Dr. Corman talked about strategies for shifting. It's very hard. It's not done easily, but it does happen. And I think of this terrific narrative about the American winning of the West and the cowboys and the Indians and how, over the last 30 years or so it's managed to shift toward the Indians. How? Why suddenly can you make this change? It does happen, but it's hard. If you just go into Afghanistan without shifting the narrative, the allegedly Quranically derived narrative about women, and start telling them, as we have, treat women well, don't stone them if they've been raped, don't steal brides, don't put them in a burqa, if you don't change the narrative, the thing that it all sits in in their mind, it's really a hopeless exercise. You can't just change the image. You can't just change the idea. That's very hard. The better things and the easier things are to look forward, look forward with new narratives. It is sometimes possible to adjust an old narrative with new facts in people's more open-mindedness over time, but the better thing is an entirely new narrative.

The other thing that Nick mentioned and something I deal with in my book quite a bit is the danger sometimes of favorable narratives, narratives you like, if they set a standard that you can't adhere to. Bill Hybl talked about the narratives about the United States and the narratives that we need to project abroad. In fact, we have this danger with those narratives, the narratives that we may not match. They may not even be narratives we've been selling. They may just be narratives people imagined for us before we even said a word, the Shangri-La narratives who can come back and bite us because we can't live up to them in the real world. But also you've got narratives about other people and narratives about their lives that control what they do.

So our focus and the focus, I think, of the Commission shouldn't just be on our image. It needs to be on what they're thinking about themselves. And, of course, Dr. Corman was heavily there. The big issue there is to give people an opportunity to develop narratives that appeal to the psychological needs that cause people to have narratives. This is not an intellectual exercise for them. They don't adopt the story because it's an interesting story or a nice story or even—it has to be a coherent story. It has to fit within its pieces. But it needs to be a story that exalts them or gives them something in common that feels good, goes to an emotional need such as a feeling of loss or gap in themselves that this fills.

That's why narratives of victimization work so well, the long Islamic narrative about victimization that Dr. Corman said relates—he didn't say it relates to, but he laid out for us the fear of invaders. This is this victimization. Talk about European colonialism, well, in the long, difficult history of the Arab world, the period of European colonization was very, very brief and for many countries didn't exist at all. And yet not only is that so strong a part of the narrative, but it even then attaches to we in the U.S. who were never the colonizer.

You need to look at what gap is being filled by the narrative and then in a future narrative seek to fill those same gaps. We were talking at the break about cultural narratives, about the Greeks wanting the Elgin Marbles back or the Parthenon Marbles as they would call them. These cultural narratives fill a gap, a gap of feeling of want to be at least equal if not superior to other people, the feeling that we Greeks who live here in Greece are direct descendents—though,

in fact, they're not—of the people who developed those great antiquities. But they'll lay claim to them. They will absorb other people's narratives just to be able to fill that gap.

So the question for us in talking about future narratives is, what is it about people not only that'll help us out, but what is it they need? What is it the stories that they're going to glom onto, what is it that those stories will give them that is important to them, that'll make it sticky, that'll make them want to tell those stories? Thanks.

DALIA DASSA KAYE: Okay, thank you. Thank you to the organizers. As someone who is not normally in the public diplomacy circuit, I'm really honored to be here. I am going to speak less. I think it's been well covered what a narrative is. Dr. Corman's presentation was excellent in terms of outlining what these Islamic extremist narratives are about. My presentation is going to actually bring us back to the Middle East. Sorry, Dr. Cull. Luckily for us, as someone who does the Middle East, we like that there's so much interest in this region, but I do agree with you, probably too much. So I'm going to bring the conversation back to the Middle East and focus a little bit on an area that some of us at RAND have been working on, which is the role that local actors and particularly artists and artwork can play in countering extremist narratives.

And actually, Barry, you gave me a good segue because Barry was talking about the need for new narratives, not just tit-for-tat countering the extremist narratives that are out there but actually presenting an alternative, an alternative story or set of stories, which is very important. And the premise of our work actually is really focused on how you can empower local actors to counter extremist messages and, in particular, artists and artwork. Because from our viewpoint, more than anything the U.S. Government may be trying to promote or send to the region, local actors themselves—any message actually we could almost think of that we may want to send to the region, it already exists. It already exists in the region by local actors. And I think the so-called Arab Spring is a very good example of this. You know, frustration with corruption and inadequate governance, all the things that we've been talking about, democracy, liberal; all of these things are issues that are being debated and discussed within these societies themselves.

So our view is, how do you empower these local actors to promote these messages within their own societies as a vehicle to counter these extremist narratives that you outlined so well? Now, we do think and we kind of make the case that artists and art, because of the unique ability to connect with people at such a deep psychological, emotional level, can actually be an incredibly powerful vehicle to tell different stories. And, in fact, nothing can tell stories better than film, increasingly television, through social media, through literature.

So what we thought is let's look at this cultural sphere and see how we can utilize it to promote some general U.S. interest. And we found that artists often can really help frame debates in important ways. They can ask questions like, what kind of society do we want? What are the implications if extremists take over our societies? What does reform actually mean? In fact, sparking debates is one of the most critical things that you can do to counter narratives because of this cohesiveness of the extremist narrative, really breaking it down by making people think critically, which is really important.

I know there's been a lot of talk earlier about the need for speedy responses. But actually one of the underlying premises of this kind of art endeavor is thinking about long-term change in

these societies, really changing mindsets over time by really entering the cultural sphere. Now, we think, in this post-Arab Spring environment, this enterprise is probably more important than ever because there's really some new opportunities out there. We have found in some previous research that you actually have burgeoning communities of artists in this region. In fact, prior projects that we've done in both the adult and children's sphere—we actually had a new monograph that just came out on children's literature promoting constructive themes like critical thinking and tolerance and pluralism, and collected a bunch of work that's in public domain for those who are interested.

We've done similar work in the adult realm. And we've really found that, if you delve in—and we have teams of native Arabic speakers who are looking at this material—that these messages and themes are really there. And, in fact, in the post-Arab Spring environment, you're seeing even more of these kinds of works popping up all over the place. And these people, these either artists or authors are really tackling critical questions. They're tackling questions of women's rights, religious pluralism, corrupt governance. And a very popular theme is inadequate education systems for these growing youth populations with very limited opportunities, really frustrated that, relative to other parts of the world, they are just being sold short in terms of the education that they're being offered in their country.

And if you look at a lot of the messages in this work, you can see that, through this artistic medium, you can really have an alternative narrative that promotes a vision of society and social justice that can be achieved through nonviolence. And so a lot of the works we're looking at are focused on tolerance and nonviolence and those general principles. The problem, that's the good news. The bad news is that a lot of this positive constructive work that is coming from the region and growing in the region is these artists are very much pressured and constrained. And they're constrained from two different directions, really.

On the one hand, you have authoritarian governments. And Arab Spring or no Arab Spring, this pressure continues. So there's an enormous amount of censorship and discouragement of presenting these kinds of alternative views that are challenging authority from the state. And from the other end of the spectrum, you have Islamic extremist movements who are kind of trying to constrain what is "acceptable behavior" or morally acceptable work and so forth. So a lot of these artists are kind of facing it from both sides, from extremists within their countries and from their own governments, which is really stifling their ability to produce their work and getting it out more broadly to broader segments of the population. And this has been a big problem. And, as I said, unfortunately, even with the Arab Spring, while there's new opportunities, many of these constraints are sadly still there.

But we do think, and you see with some of the new developments with the Arab Spring, there are some opportunities. You saw, for example, in Tunisia a really interesting project where there were photographs put up, where the former president's photo was torn down all over the streets on various walls and public places. There was a major photography initiative. A French photographer worked with six local Tunisian photographers, took pictures of ordinary Tunisians, and basically plastered the city with pictures of ordinary people, really sending the message that we are empowered, the people are empowered, and look, Tunisians can look like all different

types of people. And it was really promoting the notion of pluralism and diversity and was quite effective.

So you're seeing a lot of these opportunities. The question is, how can the U.S. Government or nongovernmental organizations, the Commission, how can we empower these artistic forces that are growing and that are already in existence? For one, direct U.S. Government support is pretty much a non-starter. Most of these artists don't want direct U.S. support. They are worried about the stigma attached to that. It undermines their own credibility in their own societies. You have to keep in mind how high anti-American sentiment is across the region. It varies from place to place, but generally extremely high. So we need to think of more creative ways of how the U.S. Government can help. And basically one of the initiatives—and we're launching a new project to really delve into this more, and we welcome any creative ideas anybody here may have—is to really try to think about how to build public-private partnerships to do this because that's really where it's key.

So what we need to do is find nongovernmental institutions, whether they're in the U.S., other parts of the Western world, and in the region itself, and partner with those local institutions who are supportive of artistic freedom, of opening up artistic space, who will fund young talent, especially to produce some of their material, help them disseminate it through social media avenues and so forth. This is really, we think, the direction we need to go. The question is really specifying a strategy for that. We are seeing indications that regional artists are already organizing on their own without a lot of outside assistance. So in Egypt, for example, you had a group of about 20 artists during the sit-in that ousted Mubarak last winter that created an organization called The Revolution Artists Union. And really what they're trying to do is elevate the role of art in their own society because they're making an argument that political revolution is not enough. You need a cultural revolution. You need to change mindsets, not just rulers.

So these groups are already, again, they're already organizing. What we need to figure out is what kind of assistance would help these groups and what kind of assistance would hurt them. And, again, it gets to, I think, your point, Dr. Cull, about listening, not just talking. We need to really talk to these people. We need to find out what these, especially the young talent that's out there, what would be helpful for them. We are also concerned about some new restrictions despite this more open environment in critical countries like Egypt.

There's new restrictions emerging for artists. While all kinds of books and films are emerging in the last month that would never have been possible under Mubarak—you know, there's one book with Mubarak in a prison outfit with a bag of money that he's running away, about corruption and the broken economy of Egypt. And obviously under Mubarak, things like that wouldn't be on the bookshelves. So there are some positive developments, but there's also growing restrictions on any work that is critical of the military leadership. Of course, with Islamic groups likely to gain more political power, there's a lot of concern about more censorship in terms of some artistic works. Muslim Brotherhood is not opposed to the artistic realm at all. In fact, they take advantage of it quite often. But more extremist Islamic groups like Salafists, they are much more conservative on this score. So there's a lot of concern. But the key issue I just want to get across is how important cultural engagement is. And this is something we think,

while we're trying to develop a public-private partnership strategy and try to be more innovative, one of the things we found through a brief review of U.S. policies—and we'll hear more, I think, from the next panelist on this—is that there's been far more focus on the U.S. kind of promoting our own values to the region, really disseminating to the extent that we're engaged in the cultural realm. It's much more about opening American centers, you know, promoting our own cultural material. This is something we did a lot in the Cold War. It's all good, or showing the role that Muslims play in American society, very positive role. We're not saying all of this isn't important. These are good programs, they should stay, and so forth.

What's missing, we think, is a more systematic U.S. strategy to really engage these local artists and figure out how to help them, again, through public-private partnerships. We, in the past, the United States spent a lot of time thinking about how culture could change mindsets and ultimately societies for the better over time.

So really our work is focused on how to reengage the U.S. Government in that effort in much more of a systematic way so that we can help these local actors, empower them. And, again, this is a long-term effort, but we do think that the role of culture can be very important in improving these societies, especially during this critical transition period. So I will end with that, and then we'll hear more about, I think, the U.S. side, I'm guessing.

PHILIP J. CROWLEY: A little bit. I join my colleagues here in expressing thanks to Matt and a pleasure to be here. I am a recovering public diplomat, eight months removed from the State Department, culminating a 30-year career as a government communicator. So I'm going to take a lot of what Barry and Nick and Dalia said and bring it back into the real world or the current world.

When I was at the State Department podium as the spokesman, I was very conscious of the impact of events on the American narrative and perceptions of the American narrative and, to some extent, viewed myself as being a defender of the American narrative and very sensitive to what Nick said in terms of the competition of narratives that is increasingly part of the world today. And I think that we can look at some of the recent events, including the tragedy of this past weekend along the Afghan-Pakistan border, as well as the remarkable transitions underway in the Middle East that provides a useful backdrop to our discussion about narratives and the challenge of the public diplomacy in the 21st century. And I want to draw from three case studies, and I recognize that three is now a very dangerous number.

But let me start with the situation in Pakistan. And I know Richard may have more to say about this later and, in fact, the work of the CSCC is central to some of these efforts. But we can see in Pakistan a strategic country. We have spent an enormous amount of time and focus on Pakistan in recent years. But we can see that a series of very specific events, particularly this year, the incident involving Raymond Davis, a CIA operative in Pakistan back in January, the ramifications of the aftermath of the bin-Laden raid, together with this current and recent incident has had a profound effect on a relationship that we always recognized was very complicated. But to some extent we had developed a modest new narrative, if you would, you know, a fragile strategic partnership.

Now, from our standpoint, all three of these actions from a U.S. standpoint were considered legitimate. However, from a Pakistani standpoint, all three actions were considered violations of national sovereignty. And both countries have spent much of this year doing purely damage control. And then we see, as Nick was pointing out, in terms of competition, even yesterday China weighed in on the side of Pakistan in terms of reinforcing its sense of sovereignty. So we have a situation where programs, exchanges, the traditional programs that Dalia was just talking about, they can over the long term somewhat rebuild a reservoir of understanding between our two countries.

You know, short-term communicating can reinforce our sense of enduring American commitment to this relationship. That's assuming that Congress, a very skeptical Congress continues to sustain current levels of civilian and military assistance. But as much as we talk about engagement, messaging, partnerships, all of them important, the most decisive element in building and sustaining a relationship, a policy, and a narrative is what we do.

And in this instance, we can see the compelling impact that our actions have had on public opinion in Pakistan and the competing narratives that we just talked about.

I mean the dilemma for government is that, in the day-to-day grind of diplomacy or policy execution, we don't always recognize what our actions communicate. And a good example of this is Iraq. And we had competing narratives in 2003. What we expected to be a swift liberation, Iraqis came to view as a turbulent and violent occupation. And now we're winding down our military mission in Iraq in accordance with the status of forces agreement negotiated by the Bush Administration. But in recent months, there was a separate negotiation to see if there was a basis upon which we could retain troops in Iraq under a different status, but ultimately could not agree on appropriate terms. And while the departure of troops from Iraq has created some controversy in this country, we are sending exactly the right message to the region at a crucial time. We honor our commitments. We respect decisions made by our partners even if we disagree with them. Barry's book highlights this as a central element of an American narrative. We honor our commitments. But this highlights a second challenge in our policy making, which by definition is focused on an individual country and its importance to regional security. We don't always put discreet actions and decisions in a larger context.

Day to day, it is hard to keep every transaction connected to a broader narrative. Steve pointed this out earlier in his discussion. We tend to do some shorthand as a result. For example, how do we balance short-term security against long-term ideals? And we tend not to put our discreet decisions in a global context, but that's exactly what we have to do.

And it brings me to the third element, which is the remarkable events of the last twelve months. Now, my former boss, Hillary Clinton, set out the American narrative in a speech on January 13 of this year. She delivered a speech at the Forum for the Future in Doha, Qatar, eight days after Mohamed Bouazizi, the Tunisian street vendor who literally lit a fire under the region, eight days after he died of his burns. You know, she talked about the youth in the region, who were demanding governments be more effective, more responsive, more open. She said the region's foundations were sinking in the sand. She challenged the region to pursue fundamental political, economic, and social reform. One day later, President Ben Ali fled Tunisia for Saudi

Arabia. Now, you talk about timing. But the fact is that, since then, the United States has been struggling to keep up with the extraordinarily complex set of events and has struggled at times to connect its determinations about events by individual countries to the reform narrative that the Secretary outlined.

Now, in some cases, our actions and our narrative have advanced in harmony. The regional and international consensus constructed around the intervention in Libya is a model of decisive action, broadly viewed as legitimate within the region and around the world. Now, in other countries, our narrative and actions have not coexisted quite so easily, perhaps most significantly in Bahrain, where we have been measured in our criticism of the reaction of the Bahraini government to its protests. Now, the release of the recent independent report that documents human rights violations helps to mitigate that judgment somewhat. However, the fact that we announced in the middle of a trial of medical professionals who were accused of treating protestors, the fact that we announced in the middle of those court cases a new arms deal for Bahrain is truly a profound mixed message.

Now, what's different about this is all of this unfolds now on a global stage, propelled by a new combination of social and traditional media. And we have a collision of interests that is manifest in this environment and actually quite public for all to see. Do we believe in democratic reform? Yes. Do we value stability? Yes. Can we have both at the same time? It remains to be seen. And if we are forced to choose one versus the other, the fact is now that most of the world has a front row seat as we make that choice. So just a few summary points so we can get to a further discussion, what are the implications of this?

First, there's no longer any differentiation between local and global. Something can happen in a remote corner of the world and have a profound impact within minutes or hours. You know, politics may still be local, but the impact is global. And the combination of social and traditional media enables more people in more places to connect dots and use information to achieve political significance. Now, going forward, while our national interests won't necessarily change and they're enduring and consistent from one administration to the next, global public opinion will impact policies and actions arguably more than it ever has before. And as we've seen recently, public opinion can impose significant costs on our actions that are not seen as legitimate, viewed as outside international norms, or perceived, as Barry said, as inconsistent with our larger strategic narrative.

Now, we may think that we can do something anywhere in the world and not be noticed. This is becoming increasingly difficult. You know, the raid of the Navy Seals that found and dispatched Osama bin-Laden was secret; it was not invisible. And to add to that, the President was scooped on Twitter before he could get to a podium to explain to the American people what had happened.

We've all talked about speed a little bit, but just to reinforce the point, given the increasing speed of the news cycle and its consequent global impact, we need to take a hard look not just at public diplomacy programs but also bureaucratic culture, training, and structure. Our public diplomacy must become more nimble and more aggressive.

You know, the extraordinary work of Ambassador Robert Ford in Syria truly is a case study. Much of the American narrative in the region today and our demonstrated support of

democracy is based on the narrative that Robert Ford has written personally. In our government today we need more Robert Fords. Now, thinking about Egypt, you know, the United States knew little about the network of activists that fueled the demonstrations in Tahrir Square that led to the departure of Hosni Mubarak.

In April, I was on a panel with an Egyptian blogger. And right before we went out, I asked him, I said, "Before Mubarak fell, did anyone in the United States Government know you existed?" And the answer was, "No." Now Secretary Clinton has put a great deal of emphasis on youth engagement. There were some strong startup programs underway, and we have to continue to nurture and expand them. And Richard's worked with them. The CSCC is directly related to engaging these kinds of networks. But if the center of gravity in the future is civilian populations, we need to know more about what worries them, what inspires them, what they think, what they want, what they need and then incorporate that into our policymaking process. And to do that well, we need to strengthen the role of public diplomacy in the decision-making process that links our day-to-day policy transactions to our strategic narrative.

And finally, we need to think and act globally, not just locally and regionally. Now, I have maybe a slightly different take about the Cold War. During the Cold War, we did in fact construct and sustain a strategic narrative that made a significant contribution to the successful outcome, which is not to say that everything we did was noble and consistent with our values or even our laws. We made critical mistakes along the way, but everything that we did and everything that we said, we understood had a broader global context.

I think because of the advance of the information revolution and this diffusion of information technology to all corners of the world, everything that we do and say today also has the same global context. And we need to adapt our public diplomacy programs, training, and culture accordingly.

CLIFF GILMORE: I'd like to offer a thank you to our panelists. And we still do have about five to ten minutes for questions from the floor. Of course, the Commissioners have right of first question. What I would ask, as these questions come forward though, is if you have a question specific for one of the panelists, please identify who they are if you're targeting the question. Otherwise, let's go for it.

MATT ARMSTRONG: We actually have until top of the hour, noon, to twelve.

QUESTION: I have a whole bunch of questions for everyone, so I'll try and limit it to the most, I guess, interesting. My first question is that, over all, do you think that we drew the wrong lessons from winning the Cold War from a public diplomacy angle? And I mean by that, that that was a very chauvinistic way to win a war of ideas with all of our American centers and our products that went around and our strong-arm use of military to sort of maintain cohesion in the parts of the world that we were trying to dominate. And is it, in fact, now in this other era that we've entered a question that has left us unable to deal with the world as it's emerged in a multi-polar way because we're still drawing from those lessons? And I guess, specifically, I look at Pakistan as a case study of a state that was sort of a pawn in the Cold War and which we didn't think about in the ways that you guys would all consider thinking about it, and specifically thinking about their culture and their educational traditions, using the Wahhabi teachings that they got from Saudi Arabia, and our sort of utter ignoring of those kinds of underlying, basic,

fundamental pieces of their culture and how they were put together. I don't know if you guys have any...

Dr. NICHOLAS CULL: I have strong views on this, having written the history of American public diplomacy during the Cold War. And I think that it's very interesting to look at the whole narrative that has formed around Cold War victory because one of the things that we shouldn't ignore about this present situation and the clash between the United States and Islam is that there are two sides who believe they won the Cold War. And for me in Britain in the 1990s, talking to people in the Pakistani community, they believed that Pakistan had won the Cold War because it was Pakistan who had put people into Afghanistan, who had broken the Soviet Union. And they believed that the future was theirs. And that narrative existed in the United States as well, this victory narrative that America was somehow ascendant, history had reached its end, and that you didn't actually—the irony is that the policy that came out of that was that you didn't need public diplomacy in the same way.

And this is the thing that really gets me about thinking about Cold War and thinking about the long history of American public diplomacy. We have a bumper sticker in Britain that says, "A dog isn't only for Christmas." You see it around this time because you have to realize that a dog is for right through the year, for a lifetime of fun and frolics, right? Well, public diplomacy is not only for crisis. And in the United States there is historically a pattern of looking to public diplomacy when there is a problem in the world that the United States wants to fix quickly.

That is not what public diplomacy is about. Public diplomacy is about getting to know those people in the world, building relationships. And what are people going to think? Is a neighbor only for a crisis? Do you only go and see your neighbor when your house is burning down? A person who's like that would seem very manipulative and self-interested. If we're talking about relationships, we shouldn't only be interested in relationships when we have a clear and present problem. Public diplomacy is not only for crisis. And so the problem after the Cold War was that public diplomacy in the U.S. had become lazy. It had justified itself in terms of the Cold War. And when the Cold War ended, the rationale for America's public diplomacy evaporated, and public diplomacy was the obvious thing to cut back when the Congress and Senate were looking for a peace dividend.

So that's my take on that whole problem. Let's have public diplomacy whether or not there's a crisis because it's the right thing to do, and move beyond the crisis narrative.

DALIA DASSA KAYE: I just want to add one short comment on that, which is while there are some important lessons, which is, you know, there was a focus on culture and it was looked at as a longer-term enterprise and so forth, we really need to be careful not to overdraw the lessons in the sense that we have to understand that context like the Middle East are vastly different than Eastern Europe and that, while in the Cold War we targeted intellectuals behind the Iron Curtain, they sought American cultural materials, they wanted more engagement with us.

We're facing a different environment in the Middle East today. Artists and intellectuals in that region are very wary of U.S. Government engagement, direct engagement. So we have to be more creative. So some of the methods may still be useful, but we need to tactically approach it

differently because we don't have that same demand from the intellectuals, from the artists in that region.

Some seek support, and we have to be careful. And that's why talking to them and engaging them in creative ways is important. But that is a major difference that we're facing. And the other major difference, of course, is that intellectuals during that time were mostly facing repression from the state. They weren't facing the same kind of two-way battle that artists and intellectuals are facing the Middle East today, which is from their own societies themselves.

So they're getting it from two different directions. So we have to think about some of the useful techniques we use but also some of the major differences. And there are many when it comes to the Middle East.

BARRY SANDERS: May I add a couple words? And I don't want to take all the remaining time. Your excellent question is particularly apt as it pertains to Pakistan. The dismantling of our public diplomacy apparatus in the '90s doesn't just take us back to neutral, where on the one hand, during the Cold War you have an active program and then you move down to zero. When we go to zero, you're actually in negative numbers because we've had the Pakistani Prime Minister, or one of them in a long series, complain. And others have complained from Pakistan that we "ignored" them. We knew them when we needed them; we ignored them when we didn't. And they don't just mean public diplomacy. They meant diplomacy diplomacy too as well as military and everything else. And we, the United States, are in a unique position in the world now and maybe a unique position in history where being noticed by us matters to people, just, as Nick keeps mentioning, as properly he should, listening.

People want to be heard. They need to be heard by us in the way they don't need to be heard by the Belgians and they don't need to be heard by the Ecuadorians and they don't care. But about us, they care. Getting our attention is an important goal around the world even if we don't end up doing what it is they'd like us to do. So when we go to zero, we go to negative.

PHILIP J. CROWLEY: Just to put a fine point on it, I think when we won the Cold War so to speak, from our standpoint, we thought there was now only one narrative. And actually there is a significant shared narrative if you read John Ikenberry's new book on Liberal Leviathan. And he says, hey, the liberal international order that we instructed during the Cold War has survived it, and it has the institutions as a club that many people still want to belong to. But I think Nick is right in terms of being the only super power, we have pullback somewhat.

But I have a cautionary tale. I know any time you have a discussion like this, there are old USIA hands who go, "We should reconstruct the agency that left ten years ago." I'm actually not one of those. I think that the integration of public diplomacy into the diplomatic realm is the appropriate structure. It brings the communicators and the public diplomats into the room where decisions are being made. And that's where we are today, so we are in a better place than perhaps we were five or ten years ago. But now we have to take the next step and incorporate public diplomacy into the actual decision-making process rather than make a decision then figure out how to engage the world based on that decision. We've just got to move it to the left more than we have in the past.

Dr. NICHOLAS CULL: Dalia, I was particularly taken by what you had to say there. I think art and poetry offer a compelling degree of message stickiness that perhaps other means lack. And looking at the Afghan context, they tend to communicate in a very lyrical, poetic way. And framing your arguments in that language can be hugely helpful. And there are few better, probably, examples of how to construct narratives. You can do an awful lot worse than perhaps look at Shakespeare (inaudible) elevate a squalid battle for—and there were squalid ends into Henry V. And we all, we Brits prefer to believe it. It suits us to do so even though it's nonsense. If you want to look at how to deconstruct a narrative, you can do a hell of a lot worse than to look at Marc Antony's funeral speech. It's fantastic in that regard. But we somehow need to be able to harness this. But recognize it can also backfire on you.

I was chatting to a conservative MP who's an ex-soldier, and he said, "Rarely does a debate in the House of Commons on Afghanistan go by without MPs quoting Kipling," which reinforce the Taliban's narrative of this sort of story of Britain's defeat in three Afghan wars. And all of the conversation revolves around that. It's all nonsense. Britain, of course, achieved its strategic ends of keeping Russia out. But somehow or other it reinforces this message that we lose each time we go in there.

DALIA DASSA KAYE: Yeah. No, I think the backfire risk is really important, which is one of the reasons we focus on local art production and not necessarily promoting—not that that's a bad thing, to have American centers with George Orwell and other great novels and some other British works and American. But it's important to build on what's already being produced in the region, which is incredibly innovative. A lot of the artistic mediums can produce role models that can counter the bin-Ladens in a much more emotional and connective way that young people will relate to.

The problem you have in the region is that there's not a lot of reading going on. So one of the things we found in some of our works on the barriers is that we're going to have to move—of course, it'd be great to increase reading levels in the region. That would be great. There are very few bookstores. If you go to Arab capitals, you know, they're usually located in one, small area. There's not a ton of bookstores, very few libraries. So you know, you can do some basic things like build better infrastructure for reading.

The Alexandria Library is a great example. But let's just face it—and this is a problem we have in our own country, I'm sure in yours as well—youth are not reading as much as they used for, for that matter, the general population. So we're going to have to move to other mediums. And so film and television are really important, and this is where you could really counter extremist messages by offering alternatives. And what's really important is alternative role models.

There's a very interesting entrepreneurial Kuwaiti businessman who produced a series called The 99. And it's focused on the 99 names of Allah, the different attributes of Allah, you know, social justice, all the kind of positive ways that you can relate to God. And he put it in cartoon format, and not just kind of a shoddy cartoon format. Because he has a relationship with Marvel Comics, I mean it is a glossy, well-produced series. It's gotten a lot of awards. It's been highlighted in various television shows here and so forth. And this was kind of an effort to reach youth, to have them connect and to show that there are different role models than bin-Laden, that

to be Islamic, to be a good Muslim means you can also be nonviolent and have very positive attributes that any U.S. Government public diplomacy message would be very happy to hear.

So it's one example, but there needs to be a lot more of this. And there needs to be a lot more support for these kinds of efforts but very much keeping in mind those risks that you discussed, which I think are very real and we're quite aware of them. Thank you.

QUESTION: Can I ask you a question about artists in general? And it's a very generalized kind of question about artists as people who, in a broad nature, a generalization, do or don't fit within the typical American narrative. And what I'm thinking of is, certainly in repressive societies, whether it's during the Cold War or all the repressive societies that exist today, artists are our natural allies in a sort of free speech approach to their work and what they do. But absent that repression, as a generality—and there's lots of exceptions like Adonis, the Arab poet, and so on—but absent that repression, artists as a generality tend to be more spiritual and traditionalist and ethnocentric in their approach than the typical American globalist, rationalist world view. And absent our being together against some repression, against expression, I'd usually find most of the artists in "the other camp." What do you think of that?

DALIA DASSA KAYE: Well, one, we found that there's a variety of types of artists. So I think it's hard to pigeonhole. Two, I think we have to be very careful—and this is where we kind of have to worry about backfiring and so forth—very careful about not getting in the game of deciding who is the good artist and who's the bad artist. I think that what we need to do is open the space.

My view is that, if you open the space for freedom of expression, sure, you're going to get a lot of artistic works that we may not like too much. And by the way, many of them that are opposed to corruption and all the things that we're opposed to also are not particularly pro-American. And we're going to have to deal with that because, you know, the alternative could be a lot worse.

But, two, I think the more you open the space, the more you have a competition. And my view is a competition and debate is healthy because that promotes critical thinking, and that allows people to criticize and challenge the extremist views that are out there. So I think right now, without any support, extremists and more the other camp so to speak views are predominating. Those are the messages we're hearing most.

So what do we have to lose if we open up that freedom of space? What do we have to lose? Because you're going to level the playing field to a much greater degree than what you have now. But absolutely, sure, you open up the space. You're already seeing—the Muslim Brotherhood apparently put out a little video. They're very savvy, you know? Again, they're not the extreme Islamists, so they are willing to capitalize on artwork and apparently put out a nice, little video about the January 25th revolution, really promoting the narrative that their youths were at the forefront of this revolution, which we know not to be the case.

The Muslim Brotherhood jumped on after. It was largely secular, apolitical. It was a different type of movement, kind of framed by this "We are all Khaled Said," you know, this Facebook page that really generated, again resonated with a lot of youth, nothing to do with the Muslim Brotherhood. But yet they're capitalizing on the more open environment and using

mediums like film to promote a different narrative. So yeah, that's not great. We don't want that narrative out there for Egyptians to think the Muslim Brotherhood was behind ousting Mubarak, no, not necessarily. They're taking advantage of it. But so what? So they're out there. If you open the space and have alternative narratives, alternative film, alternative types of messages out there, let Egyptians decide for themselves. You know, they're smart people. So I think we should focus less on trying to drown out the messages we don't like, and we should be more about opening up the space for alternative messages to be out there and let people decide.

PHILIP J. CROWLEY: That's true of the political sphere as well.

DALIA DASSA KAYE: Right, right. I think so.

CLIFF GILMORE: Here and then if we could, if we can follow up in the back, I know we have a hand that's been up.

QUESTION: Okay, I'm sorry. Just a quick question again about artists and specifically music, I've heard that there have been some very successful collaborations specifically in North Africa involving sort of fusion styles of music between U.S. artists and indigenous artists. And in light of what you were saying earlier about the sort of looking for the correct approach there, if that sort of collaboration holds a lot of promise and that that's something that should be pursued.

DALIA DASSA KAYE: Yeah, absolutely. I mean I think there's not one way to do this. You have to be creative. For example, hip hop has become very popular. There's a little film called Hip Hop in Morocco. I don't know if any of you have seen it. And actually these mediums are really important because youth really listen to this stuff and you could get very positive messages out. And I think the cultural exchange aspect is very important, but it's not the only—I think there are people who are focused on that exchange and also letting people in the U.S. understand that there's a different face so the Middle East, to the Muslim world.

That's another important agenda. The agenda I'm talking about is more of an agenda to increase debate and critical thinking and tolerance within these own societies. These exchanges are nice, they're good. But that's not going to get as much to that agenda as just increasing the understanding of the other, which again is perfectly good and important, and I'm not saying scrap all those other programs we have. But we need to bolster the empowerment agenda, the engagement, and enabling these actors to do what they're already doing. And that is a piece we haven't done as well.

QUESTION: Thank you, Dalia. I think it's very enlightening for you to talk about the opening up the stage and to encourage the critical thinking in that society. I'm just curious. When the U.S. Government trying to like funding those local partnerships, when they trying to like encourage such kind of critical thinking, how do you like deal with the U.S. Government footprint? Especially like in governments like Pakistan, there is a strong anti-U.S. like sentiment in the public, in the citizens. So when you like encourage such kind of things, how do you? Are you going to publish the art to the public, that all the things U.S. Government is doing? Or are you just minimize the U.S. Government footprint? And how are you going to strike the balance between the public and the anti-sentiment of those from the public and from the local government?

DALIA DASSA KAYE: That's a great question, which is why we're focusing on public-private partnerships. Because obviously U.S. Government should be as removed as possible. But maybe I should defer to my colleagues who actually spent many years in the U.S. Government to answer that question.

PHILIP J. CROWLEY: It's very difficult. And this is where the politics in this country sometimes impacts also how much you're willing to see and do in another contexts. Take an example. I think it was about a year ago, the imam who was associated with the "Ground Zero Mosque" was on a State Department-sponsored tour, talking about the meaning of Islam in the Middle East. And it created a domestic political firestorm here that had an impact. Actually in one sense it enhanced the conversation that was going on in the region even as it probably somewhat undercut support for public diplomacy programs within an increasingly conservative U.S. Congress.

So there is tension here. Certainly if you move from the cultural to the political, the fact that we are a promoter of democracy in the region and yet we refuse to recognize the results of the last Palestinian election handicaps our ability to resolve the Middle East peace process.

Now, there are very solid policy reasons for the United States to have the stance that it does. However, it has an undeniable impact in terms of perceptions of our narrative and our willingness to tolerate voices and debates for which we may not agree with the tone or the substance. That is our challenge now as we look at governments that are going to become increasingly Islamist without spending enough time to understand who they are and what they represent and be willing to see larger political, social, and cultural space of which some things will be pleasing to us and some things will make us uncomfortable and will complicate our policy making in the future.

Dr. NICHOLAS CULL: I just had one response, was that what other countries do to avoid the problem of the presence of the foreign ministry in cultural diplomacy is to have a separate agency, a quasi-nongovernmental agency look after that interface. So the British have the British Council, the Germans have the Goethe-Institut, the French are now developing something more along the lines of the British Council. All these countries know something. And whilst P.J. is absolutely right, the public diplomacy does well; the advocacy function does well embedded in the Department of State at the table in the planning and so forth.

Cultural diplomacy is not helped at all by being inside the foreign ministry. And no other country in the world or no free country in the world conducts cultural diplomacy that way. And it's time for the United States to get smart and catch up with what the rest of the world has known for a long, long time.

CLIFF GILMORE: And with that (inaudible).

MATT ARMSTRONG: Well, wait. Before I've got a question. I'm going to take the prerogative of the Commission and ask the panel a question. This is a great opportunity to ask this. First, I want to start off with a comment. P.J., you echoed something about the bureaucracy, and you echoed comments that Chairman Hybl made, which was what we say and do and what we fail to say and do has an impact in other lands. I suspect Nick knows where that comes from, and I'll bet you Barry does as well. And that's Eisenhower and his foreign policy

plank speech, to the point that we understood that policy and the words and deeds gap were not something you could suffer lightly.

In fact, arguably, that is why (a) the Commission exists, and (b) that's why this thing we call public diplomacy exists, which was actually to support policy rather than change the subject or put lipstick on a pig. So with that in mind, there seems to be an imperative which keeps coming up in the questions and the statements, that we have a tremendous imperative to get this stuff right.

So we have an Assistant Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs right now. We have Tara Sonenshine, who is the nominee for the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. I'd like to ask the panel what quick suggestions you might have, noting that, for example, in the area of cultural diplomacy, I was just in Afghanistan a couple of weeks ago and the Herat Citadel project, tremendously well received, an incredibly small amount of relative money—\$1.1-\$1.2 million U.S. money—in partnership with several organizations and other countries, rebuilt a cultural site that the Afghans love. In fact, at the ceremony dedicating it, the only negative comments there were the Afghan district chief, head of the Council, I forget his title, attacking the Minister of Cultural Affairs for not providing more support. They love this. And it's cheap and inexpensive.

So in a quick, short elevator bit, here's your opportunity to give advice to Tara Sonenshine as she preps for her hearings. What would you suggest should be done? Please go ahead, Nick.

Dr. NICHOLAS CULL: Let's start with P.J. You have to start at the other end this time.

PHILIP J. CROWLEY: Well, I think she's going to do a great job, first of all. And she is a global thinker and will see the public diplomacy implications of all of the policies that we pursue. But I would just endorse what Nick just said as an adjunct, which is we've seen even recently in the Congressional requirement under law to withdraw funding for UNESCO over a policy tiff that has really nothing to do with UNESCO, that, had our funds then on the private side versus the public side, we would not have somewhat undercut our global standing on cultural educational issues by making it a hostage to other policymaking aspects. But Tara will bring a global perspective to the job, which I think, underneath all of the Assistant Secretaries of Regional Affairs, somebody's got to be looking at the bigger picture. And I think Tara will do that.

DALIA DASSA KAYE: Yeah, not much to add. A lot of questions were directed on the cultural sphere, so I don't want to dominate it anymore. But I would just add that I think the continuing focus on the example you just suggested, really understanding and appreciating how much cultural engagement can do for our interests and for bettering the societies themselves, so elevating the role of cultural engagement, cultural diplomacy, and thinking about innovative ways to do that, whether it's the creation of a quasi-governmental agency, which I think is an interesting idea, figuring out public-private partnerships where we can leverage U.S. support in an indirect way because of the sensitivities in the region, these are things we need to be thinking creatively about and building on.

BARRY SANDERS: And though in my early remarks I emphasized worrying about the narratives that others hold about themselves, here I want to focus for her on narratives about us. And I think that there are five issues in particular—there could be more but five particular issues that people around the world need to have explained to them in believable ways about the way the U.S. operates and what the U.S. is. Not that we're rich, they know it. Not that we stand for democracy, they know it. But the areas that they don't feel they know. One was mentioned by a couple of my colleagues here. Our issue of reliability and that we honor our commitments, that has to be emphasized. Others have talked about what you could call the say-do problem, that we are true to our values and we do what we say. But there's three others that haven't been mentioned.

One is that we care for the interests of others, and that's implicit in air strikes against Pakistan, that we do care for the interests of others, not only our own interests. That we are compassionate, again, issues and narratives go to people's emotions and things they care about most. And they care about their families and their lives more than anything else. And then the last one's the one I would talk to her about right now. And it's something not exactly in her department, but almost, and that's our visa policies.

The fifth issue that I think carries the most water in people's minds is the question of whether we are an open society, open to people's ideas, whether we listen, as Nick appropriately said, but also open to not only moving in but open to visits. Right now it takes five months if you're a Chinese person to get a tourist visa to the U.S. Now, we have to worry about people overstaying visas. That's half of our illegal population, is overstays. But we aren't spending five months looking at their application. We put it at the bottom of a pile and spend five minutes five months from now. This has a lethal impact on people's narrative about America and our long-standing statement that we are an open society.

Put aside the question of our narrative, we could use their money and their tourism. And it pays for itself. People pay for these visa applications. Why it is we've understaffed this and then why it is they are greeted at the gate often with truculence and rudeness. Not always. We have many people who work in the bureaucracy who are kind and properly mannered, but we have far too many who are exactly the opposite throughout ICE and the Consular Corps. And we need to train them, and we need to get them customer service training, and we need to monitor them and manage them the way you always have to manage a bureaucrat who's dealing with someone on the other side of the table who has no power. We don't do this well. If we fix that, we go to one of the five biggest issues we face.

Dr. NICHOLAS CULL: What's sad, Matt, is that we had this conversation with Karen Hughes when she came in in 2005, and all the same issues came up, including the visa issue, which was made at some length. And when she made that point herself to Homeland Security, she was told that there's no way we're changing. And so it's so sad and so very, very counterproductive. If I had one word of advice, it would be this apart from to stress the importance of listening. It's to understand that the United States is not the most credible voice on every subject under the sun. Because of the way the networked society works, it's now possible to connect people to people who are credible to them. And we know from research that, for most people, the thing that is most credible to somebody is somebody who is like them. And we're

never going to be like everybody around the world. But what we can do is work to empower somebody who is credible to them and to think about our public diplomacy as being more about facilitation, more about empowerment, and less about listen while America tells everybody around the world what to think and what to do. I think that that shift would be a very important thing to take onboard.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Commissioners, do you have any last questions? Okay. Well, okay. Take it, Cliff. Cliff's now deferring to me. They were great. I thank Nick. I think Nick has to get back down to USC. Nick was my professor. I was in that first Public Diplomacy class, the first two graduates. I was second in my class of two. So I prefer second in my class. So Nick, thanks for coming down here. Barry, thank you very much. Great conversations, P.J. and Dalia. So terrific panel. Thank you very much.

I'm glad I added fifteen minutes to this break because now we have fifteen minutes left on this break rather than thirty. Lance, if you can throw up the agenda. At the bottom of the hour I would like to start to get us back on schedule, the lunchtime keynote, Dr. Eric Larson of RAND.

So RAND has provided box lunches outside the door. Help yourself. Take a break. Please be back in here at the bottom of the hour, at 12.30, for the next conversation. I think this panel, though, is actually going to set us up very well for the second panel, which is practitioners. And I think it will be interesting to hear Ambassador LeBaron and Damon Stevens, what they have to say about this. So thank you very much, panel, and thank you.

Lunch Keynote

MATT ARMSTRONG: (in progress)...arrange the USC clan. Nick, do we have you for longer? I thought you were going to leave.

Dr. NICHOLAS CULL: Until 1.00.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Okay. So Eric, when Nick leaves in the middle of the meaty part of your presentation, don't take it personally. He did tell me he's going to have to leave early. So we're glad that he's here. So again, thank you for being here. Let's continue on with the program. Now we have the lunchtime keynote. Please keep eating. If you want more, there's more back there. If you want more to drink, there's more back there as well, and thanks again for RAND for providing the lunch.

So I'm going to introduce Dr. Eric Larson, Senior Policy Researcher at RAND specializing in national security affairs. His recent research has focused on al-Qaeda's narrative, discourse and strategy, the mobilization of public support for insurgency and terrorism, strategic communication and influence operations and, of course, irregular warfare. Do a lot of people still use irregular warfare? That used to be the big catchphrase. I'm not seeing it as much, do you?

Dr. ERIC V. LARSON: It's still got some currency.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Okay. So I'm going to turn it over to Eric. Just as with Steve and with the panel, there'll be a presentation and then we invite your discussion, and really push the questions. So Eric, thank you.

Dr. ERIC V. LARSON: Thank you for the introduction. Mr. Chairman, Vice Chairman, Ambassadors, commission members, ladies and gentlemen, it's a pleasure to be here with you to talk about narratives. I've actually been tracking the conversation up in my office. The web is a wonderful thing so I've tried to follow the presentations and the discussions so I could stay abreast of some of the thinking and I thought that there was a very rich set of presentations and conversations over the course of the morning.

My focus today is going to be on the uses and limitations of narratives. I was actually hoping to be provocative. I thought that the assembled masses here might fall into group-think and a sense of comfort about narratives, but I was somewhat disappointed to find that there were more points of agreement, I think, that popped up over the course of the morning, some of the things that I'm going to be saying, than I'd really anticipated particularly Professor Corman's presentation.

I think where we started from very different places, at least based on the empirical results and some of the observations; we've ended up in pretty similar places. Let me just say that I haven't really engaged in public diplomacy issues since I was a young man at the NSC staff. In the 1980's I had the opportunity to serve as a Junior Analyst and worked on issues like the intermediate nuclear range forces in placement of the missiles in Europe which involved a very important public diplomacy dimension (that is until recently).

I recently had the opportunity to share a dissertation committee by Michael Egner, a RAND Pardee Graduate School fellow, who wrote a dissertation on frames in public diplomacy, and I think he really did some path-breaking work on understanding the role of frames, but also the role of local opinion leaders; in this case European opinion leaders, in shaping European opinions and the greater efficacy of their efforts in shaping opinions than U.S. efforts to shape those opinions.

Okay, let me give you my bottom line up front. First of all, I think that strategic narratives can provide a nice starting point for understanding the attitudes of target audiences and also for countering adversaries, but I think that it's really only a starting point. I think they're a necessary but insufficient condition for understanding and for developing effective U.S. Government communication activities.

What one needs to understand in addition to narratives is the very complicated interactions among a number of different kinds of moving parts. There are social aspects, dynamic aspects, competitive messaging, and one needs to understand the play of all of that to really understand the path of discourse and what's influencing attitudes of target populations. We still need to understand, in Harold Lasswell's classic formulation, who says what to whom through what channel with what effect. We can't avoid this problem really. It's really quite essential to the enterprise of public diplomacy. And I think as a number of speakers suggested this morning, tying policy actions to messaging is crucially important.

From my vantage point, particularly where attitudes may be fairly well crystallized already, it may only be by undertaking policy actions that you can unfreeze attitudes for a moment and have some impact in terms of shaping them or shifting them. And I think my punch line is that I think, as a policy wonk it should be no surprise that a sophisticated program of analysis is in order to inform strategy development and inform public diplomacy operations. And I'll get into some of the details of that but I think this captures most of the moving parts that one needs to attend to.

All right, Cliff Gilmore very helpfully sent a list of questions when I inquired what the Commission's specific interests were, and these are the questions that Cliff offered up. What I'm going to do is address the first four of those which have to do with my views on what narratives are, and extend those a bit into sort of more dynamic concepts. I'll also, by demonstration, touch upon that fourth bullet of what schools of thought, theory and research might we look to, and I'll be using two different lenses.

One is the lens of social movement theory and the other is what you might think of as policy sciences or systems perspective on the problem. And I'm going to leave the last three questions untouched but if we have time maybe we can return to those if those are of interest.

All right, here's my outline. I'll be talking about narratives. I'm going to extend the conversation from narratives to a discussion of discourse, frames, framing and framing contests which I think really get at some of the more interesting aspects of this world, the dynamic aspects and the competitive aspects.

I'm going to address two different perspectives in terms of the narratives. First, the narratives of adversaries and my work on al-Qaeda will be the base for that. I'll sort of give you an overview of some of the findings from our work on al-Qaeda and its propaganda efforts. And then I'll present the results of an application of a social movement theory framework to understanding what al-Qaeda has been up to. Then what I'm going to do is I'm going to do a bit of an intellectual pivot; I'm going to shift from adversaries to the U.S. Government side and discuss narratives from a policy sciences view which has more sort of prescriptive aspect to it. What are the core characteristics or requirements of effective communication or influence operations?

Then at the end what I'd like to do is raise some issues that I think may be of interest to the Advisory Commission that they might keep in mind as they go around and talk to various government actors to be able to assess and appraise our capabilities in this area. Okay, what is a narrative? I think that this definition tracks pretty much with all of the presentations that were offered this morning. It's stories people tell that are embedded in culture and history and common experiences.

I should note that there's a social, constructive aspect of all of this. A narrative that's shared by a large population, maybe over multiple generations, hundreds of years, is not something that's going to be subject to manipulation or change; it's likely to remain relatively inert, I think. And I'll be going beyond this sort of inert view shortly.

Okay, another way of thinking about a narrative is a simplified representation of a group's world view. One can get at this through other mechanisms like public opinion survey

and attitude surveys. A set of shared assumptions about the group or the world, some of which may be unstated, all of which may be unstated. It's a backdrop for discourse within any community, and between a community, and external communities. And it's one source of material for use in framing and other meaning-making activities.

Narratives provide a wealth of symbols and icons and norms and other elements that can be used in these meaning-making activities. Let me just say lastly, I think the point is that the principle narrative that's going to be of interest, and I think this corresponds to a recurring point in Professor Cull's presentation I really quite agree with, that the target audience is really the narrative that's of greatest interest here.

One needs to understand the basic predispositions, the biases, to be able to have any hope really of assessing the likelihood that something that one says or does is going to be received well or poorly. Okay, what I'd like to do now is shift toward a more dynamic perspective.

First, I defined discourse which is conversations; we're just talking here. We're talking within our group or we're talking between our group and outside actors. And there's a certain set of boundaries and so on, on the internal discourse. But those two aspects, the internal discourse and the discourse between a group and those outside are sort of the key dimensions of this, I think.

Frames, these are ways to make meaning of events and conditions. I think Benford and Snow's definition is particularly helpful here. Frames help to render events or occurrences meaningful and, thereby, function to organize experience and guide actions. So there's a meaning-making quality in frames. Collective action frames: this is where agency comes in, this is where purposefulness comes in, this is where groups and leaders will attempt to mobilize individuals or members within the group or bring additional members into the group, mobilize individuals into a particular belief system or a particular program of action.

Lastly, framing contests are contests in which antagonists employ competing collective action frames to inform, influence and/or win adherence. So we go from agency on the one hand to a competitive information environment in which different actors are proposing different points of view and hoping to win over to their points of view the audiences that they're both addressing. And I think some of the best work on framing contests, at least in the al-Qaeda domain, has been done by Quentin Wiktorowicz. I don't know how many of you might be familiar with his work but it's really exceptionally well done.

Let me talk a little bit about our research on al-Qaeda. We've tracked al-Qaeda's narrative and discourse over three years and, in a separate study, we tracked al-Qaeda's strategic thinking over three years. The basic upshot of that work—and I report and update that work in our recent volume on 9/11 that was released just before the 10th anniversary—the upshot of that is that al-Qaeda really is quite riven by internal contention. There are lots of fault lines, wedge issues and disagreements within the overall movement. They're also under attack from outside, from a number of different voices. They've had a number of different defections. They've had mainstream clerics who have increasingly been attacking them and so they're under great pressure and great duress from the vantage point of the efficacy of their propaganda and the level of support they're getting. And all the public opinion data that I have seen suggests that, in fact, they've been losing Muslim hearts and minds, all right. So what we've found was that al-

Qaeda's narrative really was only just a starting point for understanding what was going on with the group.

We also needed to understand, and I think this echoes some of the empirical results that Professor Corman reported earlier, you need to understand the events and conditions shaping decisions, behavior and messaging. Al-Qaeda is attempting to navigate a very hostile environment and makes strategic decisions and tries to maneuver around the obstacles that it faces. We need to understand the propaganda figures, the public intellectuals, the critics.

What are their cue scores? Is Abu Yahya al-Libi more popular than Ayman al-Zawahiri? These kinds of things matter, the credibility of sources, their attractiveness, other features. One needs to understand al-Qaeda's rhetoric, its apologetics, its discourse and its framing efforts.

Intra-movement contention: a good example that came up just before bin-Laden's death was there were increasing criticisms of bin-Laden from within the al-Qaeda movement, that bin-Laden had failed to adhere to Mullah Omar's instruction not to attack the U.S., and that's a very grave misstep on the part of an emir. He was seen as, by some within the al-Qaeda movement as no longer fit to be within the movement and there was sort of an increasing drumbeat over the decade from 9/11.

One needs also to understand the structure and the performance of propaganda systems and their operations. I liked the chart Professor Corman presented before about al-Qaeda's strategic shift from Iraq to Afghanistan and Pakistan. We also did our content analyses and tracked geographic references and we saw a decline in al-Qaeda Central's mentions of Iraq. Their position Iraq was (inaudible) to it, and increasing references to Afghanistan and Pakistan.

So we waited and we were expecting a public decision, a public statement to Jihadis to shift their focus, to move from Iraq to Afghanistan and in July of 2009, we saw statements both from al-Zawahiri and from bin-Laden saying our new front is in Afghanistan and Pakistan. All right, one also wants to understand the relative resonance of messaging and counter-messaging, listening to the audience and listening again to the audience and understanding how messages are playing and how they're parsing developments in the world.

I want to borrow from Michael Doran on this quote. He says that when it comes to matters related to politics and war, al-Qaeda maneuvers around its dogmas with alacrity. It also maneuvers around its narratives with alacrity. You should think of them as opportunistic politicians who are going to reshape what they're saying to better be able to achieve objectives, promote their objectives or to minimize harms to their organization. So it's a very dynamic process. It's not hide-bound, theologically bound and so on. They're very conscious about how they employ various messaging strategies to assist them in navigating this hostile world that they're in.

I recently did a study with my colleague, Paul Davis, for JIEDDO, the Joint IED Defeat Organization, called Understanding and Influencing Public Support for Insurgency and Terrorism. And in this study, Paul asked me to apply the lens of social movement theory to al-Qaeda.

To use it as a diagnostic lens for understanding what al-Qaeda was up to, where their vulnerabilities might be and so on. And it was a five-part framework that we used. Strategic

objectives and decision-making: there's a purposefulness to what they're trying to accomplish and they reason about their environment, they may have some odd ideas, we may not view things in the same way but there is a sense of strategic reasoning in the actions that they take. Ideology and narrative provides sort of a core set of worldviews that are shared within the organization and that is in red because this is one of those areas where narratives kind of turn up in this world.

They don't turn up so much in the strategic objectives and decision-making, but they turn up here. Narratives also turn up in frames and framing processes, how they employ various kinds of materials, narrative materials, cultural materials, religious materials and so on, in their rhetoric and in their apologetics. Resource mobilization, the networks, the money, the fighters and so on that they have available, narratives really don't turn up very much there. And political opportunities and constraints, really this is a reflection of the level of repression a group is facing or the level of political openness it's facing, its ability to maneuver within its environment.

So we use this five-part frame to take a look at al-Qaeda. The strategic objectives and decision-making, I think we all know that the nominal objective is restoration of the Caliphate; a pretty farfetched idea. Strategy is to expel the far enemy protectors from Arab and Muslim lands, to clear the way for removing the near enemy, these local apostate regimes.

They feel that they can't remove the regimes unless the Western influence is removed, but also exploiting zones of savagery, in Abu Bakr Naji's phrasing. These are areas that are ungoverned, they lack police forces, political control, and so on, and where they can operate with relative freedom.

All right, ideology. It's largely based on a salafi-jihadi reading of Muslim sacred text coupled with a narrative of Muslim humiliation and oppression—I think that's consistent with some of the other comments that were made earlier today—and a view of itself as a vanguard movement. They want to be among the 3,000 of the 1.3 billion Muslims who are standing at the end of time in front of Allah and being rewarded for their good service. So this bullet touches on narratives, in a sense, but narratives don't completely envelope the ideas there.

Next bullet, framing, rhetoric, apologetics and so on, touches on narratives as well. But there're also references to symbols and sacred values and images and other kinds of things that can be used as part of a persuasive strategy. And they can draw not just from the narratives but from religion, culture and history. AQ's mobilization resources, I mentioned social networks, they also have a web-based propaganda system. It's not terribly effective, in my opinion, and somewhat unreliable. I think they do benefit though from perceptions within parts of the Muslim world that even if they're misguided, that they, in fact, are religious guise and they have some benefit, I think, from these perceptions of religiosity.

Okay, lastly on political opportunities and constraints I think al-Qaeda is facing crippling constraints right now, but it tries to shape developments and also respond to developments as best they can within this generally hostile environment that we and our coalition partners have created for them.

Okay, what I'd like to do now is shift from al-Qaeda and shift from the social movement theory lens to an alternate lens. This is a fairly well-developed body of work from the social and behavioral sciences that informs this particular lens. I'm going to call it a policy sciences view of

communication but it weaves in a social psychology, political science work, psychology, communications and a variety of other disciplines.

All right, Lasswell's who says what to whom, through what channel and with what effect is a very trenchant way, I think, of getting us to focus on the various parts of communication and the efficacy of communications. The speaker or the sources, the content of the messages, the target audience, the channels that are used, which media, which channels are used to reach target audiences and with what effect to be able to do some sort of assessment, pre-existing attitudes, beliefs and post-treatment attitudes and beliefs, if you will. And I've highlighted the "says what" and "to whom". That's where narratives kind of turn up in an indirect way, I think, in that formulation. Most recently I came across what I have to say is a very ugly acronym, SCAME, which captures the same basic ideas as Lasswell's original formulation—source, channel, audience, message and effect—and audience and message are lit up in red here because, you know, this is where narratives come in and play in some way. So this is sort of a simple formulation of this view.

Let's make it a little bit richer. What we're most interested in is how our messages affect target audiences' beliefs, attitudes, preferences and behaviors. All right so but we're competing, as suggested by the "and others" in the parenthesis, we're competing with others who have their own messages. In many situations we're facing a two-message world in John Zaller's sort of description. In other cases there may be multiple types of messages that are competing for attention.

Now, beyond messages, there're events that are taking place within the world that seize the attention of our audiences and those also can affect attitudes, beliefs and preferences. Moreover, much of the messaging that goes on, whether it's an adversary messaging or U.S. messaging or other messaging, is interpreting these events through a particular frame or particular lens to try to reify or provide supporting evidence, if you will, for that group's view; for the U.S. view, let's say, or for the al-Qaeda view.

All right, let's move along. In Western societies, at least, we get most of our information through the mass media, television and radio, newspapers and that sort of thing. Increasingly though we go online and interact with the New York Times website and so on. But there's sort of a mass communication element to this. And a couple of things can happen here that can disrupt the flow of a message to the target audience.

First of all, the message may not be reported at all. Second of all, the message may be bowdlerized or reported in a piecemeal fashion or it may be spun in a way that the original source of the message really didn't intend and didn't like. So there are a number of different ways that one's message can get tripped up at that level. Mass media is not the only way that people gain political information and knowledge about the world. We know from American public opinion, we also know from a lot of public opinion work that's been done in the Middle East that indirect communications, the Arab street, the local tea houses, the local wise man, and so on, those are crucially important in informing the attitudes of people, particularly those who are not well educated, perhaps not literate. So this is another path by which information can proceed and we need to try to understand not just the mass communications play of these messages but also indirect communications.

In addition, there are unmediated communications. One might observe an event, a bomb going off or something directly but very few people generally tend to observe news-worthy events themselves, but posters, handbills, town halls, direct email and those kinds of things presents another domain in which messages can be carried. So one wants to understand the play of all of these and one wants to understand individuals' awareness.

Individuals self-select different mixes of media; they prefer different media. If you send a message down a channel that your intended audience doesn't ever use, you're not likely to be very effective. The probability of being aware of news or a message is affected by a number of different factors: education, political knowledge and so on. And there's a substantial body of work that addresses this question, primarily dealing with American public opinion, but the lessons in that literature I think apply equally well to other societies.

All right, having become aware, or not, of (inaudible) the individual does in fact become aware, there's another filter here which has to do with the acceptability of the message or the rejection of the message; the probability of accepting or rejecting that message. And much of that has to do with how well that message or how much that news report comports with one's pre-existing views. If it's challenging somebody's fundamental values, one shouldn't expect a message or a communication to have any effect whatsoever.

All right, depending on how deeply held those beliefs are, depending on how grounded they are, how crystallized they are, one can encounter great problems trying to get one's message through this particular filter; to get target audiences to accept the message. All right, now assuming we've gotten through all of these gates, then you may or may not affect the target audience's beliefs, attitudes, preferences and behaviors. This is a significant set of challenges for any communication activities and from my vantage point, the only real way to sort of inform communication activities is to make sure that you're assessing each of these different points.

You have robust survey programs and you're doing content analysis of media and other kinds of things like that so that you can make sure that you understand this overall system and you can follow the flow of messages in this larger system. This is a relatively sophisticated model but it's in simplified form. We did a study a few years back on influence operations which was a new idea, a concept that had been developed I think by Joint Forces Command, the now defunct Joint Forces Command, and the Army asked us to tell them what we thought influence operations might be. As part of that work, what we tried to do is identify characteristics of effective influence operations or requirements of effective influence operations. We judged that the requirements included directing influence operations toward key target audiences, and I say key target audiences because some audiences matter more than others in a political society if you're trying to accomplish largely political goals or strategic goals to achieve specific desired effects; a change in attitude, change in behavior, whatever it might be. They require or make use of messengers with compelling source characteristics, likability, perceived expertise; there are a whole range of source characteristics that can condition the likelihood that a speaker will be persuasive.

They rely upon messages with compelling content characteristics; again, narratives kind of turn up here in a partial way. Those content characteristics could refer to elements of a

narrative or sub-narratives or some of those components, but they could also refer to sacred values or other characterizations.

They make use of the most effect combination of information channels. If you've isolated a particular target audience, you want to try to understand what radio stations they listen to, what television they watch, what news sites or web sites they might occasion so you can make sure that you're targeting your messages to the places where they are going to be.

They're mindful of audience characteristics, Professor Cull's idea about listening. Listening is crucial before you undertake these operations, after you've undertaken them so you can adapt your understanding and refine your understanding of your target audience so the next time you'll do a better job.

I'm reminded of John Wannamaker's statement, I'm sure you've all heard it. I know I'm wasting half of my advertising budget, I just don't know which half. Well, unless you're able to adjust your characterizations to those audience characteristics, you're unlikely to be terribly effective. They need to be synchronized with other actions. As I mentioned earlier, I think probably the greatest potential may exist when messaging is linked to substantive policy actions that can in some way shake up the pre-existing beliefs and attitudes and perhaps create an opening for attitude change, belief change or adjustment of a narrative at the margin. There are times to influence actors before they decide or act or attitudes crystallize.

This is crucially important. It can take a while for an issue to develop in the public mind and it can take a while for the public to develop crystallized, stable views and not be influenced by, if you're using survey instruments, question wording and other kinds of things that can reveal just how crystallized or uncrystallized or stable those attitudes are. So timing is crucial here. Facilitate adaptation by providing timely feedback on affects.

Again, you want to have a feedback loop so you can do that refinement, the adaptation of your strategy and your targeting efforts, your messaging efforts and so on. Let me shift to—this is going to be my last slide. What I'd like to do is put on the Commission's radar, if you will, a set of issues that I think it may want to try to attend to as it talks to other actors within government about public diplomacy, programs and capabilities and so on, so that you can assure yourselves that the government is doing all of the things that it can be doing to make sure it can get that whole chain right and understand that whole chain so that we can have effective communications.

So the big question is does the U.S. Government have the necessary programs to baseline and track with enough fidelity to inform strategy, policy and communications, the key attitudes and beliefs of its intended audiences? And I have to say I think we're a bit impoverished in terms of the survey data, for example, that are available. We could use much more robust survey program. I'm sure this has come up in your discussions before.

It's kind of remarkable to me that 10 years after 9/11 we're where we are, or where we aren't. Next, do we have the programs that allow assessment of the dynamics of these framing contests and contention? Can we identify opportunities? Can we identify vulnerabilities of our adversaries and exploit them in a reasonably timely manner? Third, who says what to whom,

through what channel with what effect? Are we doing a good job right now in tracking all of these different dimensions of the communication enterprise?

Next major issue is—the question is the government embracing an approach that addresses the various requirements of effective influence operations that we identified in foundations of effective influence operations? It's a coupling of that flow model with the sort of best practices lessons that we identified in our work. Are we doing all of those things in a functional way?

Third, is the government integrating messaging and policy actions in ways that enhance the likelihood of disrupting prior beliefs and enhancing the prospects for message acceptance and changes in attitudes, beliefs or behavior? Are we using all the tools at our disposal in a sensible way where we can integrate our messaging activities with our other activities? Last question is, how much focus should we put on narratives vis-à-vis other lines of analysis? I tend to lean towards sort of a behavioralist school, that sort of thing. I'm comfortable with surveys, public opinion surveys, attitude surveys, various techniques for mapping attitudes and understanding how attitudes shift—a very quantitative sort of approach. I wonder whether those kinds of approaches can't give you more granularities and more specificity than a narrative-based approach that has something of a static quality to it.

And what combination of these different methods? How much money at the margin do we want to put into a focus on narratives as opposed to any of these other lines of analysis that are required, really, to inform U.S. public diplomacy and other messaging activities. And that is my lucky thirteenth slide, and I'd be happy to take any comments, questions, javelins or—I don't know, I guess we start with the Commission members. I think that's appropriate.

ANNE WEDNER: (Inaudible). Okay, I've got two questions. One that I want—two questions. One that I am looking, and am curious about and that is how do you deal as you're evaluating the programs with the noise of other non-U.S. Government participants in those markets? So private sector, NGOs and others that are messaging and whose messages can be contradictory or complimentary to the ones that you're trying to see an effect from.

So that's the first question. And the other question was did you read *In the Garden of the Beast* by, I think it's the other Erik Larson. It's about Germany at the time of Hitler's rise and talking about the fault lines inside of that regime. It's really a good read if you haven't read it.

Dr. ERIC V. LARSON: Well, I'll make sure I buy a copy so my cousin Erik Larson II manages to make some money off of me. I've not read that book nor any of Erik Larson's fictional works. I feel like a lesser author as a result because he seems to have a fair amount of popularity.

On the question of noise, you know, that's a really tough one. I think there are two answers. One, it's important that one's coalition partners have a common set of themes and viewpoints and that sort of thing and I recognize that that can be like herding cats sometimes. So you're kind of left with the second best solution which is if you can just kind of track what your coalition partners are saying and doing so you can so spot particularly important divergences in the things you're saying or the messages you're communicating, then you may have a better

triage system for trying to avoid the worst harms that might befall you as a result of disconnect between your own messaging and your partners.

Amb. PENNE PEACOCK: To go back to your words about narrative, I had an appointment last week with the United States Ambassador to France, and I think that where we're missing something is, first of all, the Department of Defense does a wonderful job through our military in what they do. The State Department, a lesser job, but the Ambassador in France who's very effective and also the one in Germany, both of those two Ambassadors are reaching out to the young people and I think that's where you can more effectively change narrative and where you can sort of bring them along. And the word earlier this morning was "stickiness" and that goes back to what Dalia was saying about culture and art and those sorts of things, a very effective way of doing that.

Dr. ERIC V. LARSON: Yes, I think one aspect of growing older is we become more convinced of the conclusions we've reached about the world, and from that vantage point I think that focusing on younger members of the public where we have our embassies is a very good way of affecting attitudes when perhaps they're still somewhat pliable, they're still somewhat more subject or receptive to influences and they're not just writing you off any longer.

At some point, you have to sort of understand what your cut points are. But I think this is a great, you know, this is a great strategy for the future. If you want quick results, well then, you're going to have to wait some time before, you know, these kids grow up and that sort of thing. But as a long-term strategy—here we go—long-term strategy for the future I think, I think that's exactly right, yes. You mentioned this slide—did you want to go back to this slide?

Amb. PENNE PEACOCK: (Inaudible).

Dr. ERIC V. LARSON: Okay. Oh okay, okay.

QUESTION: You talk about al-Qaeda, how strong are they now? I mean, how strong are they still? How many members would you estimate? And then my second question is, are there similar groups like al-Qaeda out there and do they have any power? What's happening there?

Dr. ERIC V. LARSON: Yeah, yeah. My guesstimate—I mean, these numbers are very difficult to come by. My guesstimate is that we're probably talking about, in terms of core al-Qaeda members and the various al-Qaeda Central and the affiliates we're talking about maybe somewhat over 1,000 in total. I mean, several hundreds maybe in Somalia, several hundreds maybe in Yemen, a hundred couple—several hundreds in al-Qaeda Central, a hundred-something in Islamic Maghreb, you know, their Algerian branch. The numbers are exceptionally small. bin-Laden himself, his recruiting goal—it was interesting—he wanted 1 out of 100,000 Muslims. If he got one out of 100,000 Muslims to support him, he had hit his recruiting goal, right? So that's about—I think about 13,000 total members.

The problem is that the kinds of violence that al-Qaeda specializes in is so easy to achieve, you know, the materials are available and that sort of thing, that it's not really a numbers question. A small number of individuals can cause just tremendous destruction and death and

mayhem and that's sort of the signature of al-Qaeda. You know, do more with less, you know, might be their motto at some level. Now, if you wanted sort of an order of magnitude estimate, I would say probably between 1,300 maybe and 13,000, something like that. That would be one out of 100,000 Sunnis, I guess, or one out of 10,000 Sunnis. The hit rate, you know—one out of 100,000, one out of 10,000—the hit rate on recruiting is very, very low.

Commander JONATHAN WORTHINGTON: Eric, thank you very much. I think one thing, one must be somewhat careful about over-cooking this issue of constructing narratives. It isn't, I don't think, especially different. The key is to keep to a simple, clear set of messages in your master narrative and that is especially important when you're fighting alongside allies and when you're working alongside other agencies and NGOs. If you start trying to tailor all sorts of bespoke messages then you run into danger of losing sight of your master messages and things can become unstuck.

The simple message in Afghanistan, for example, is we are right and we will win. And that ultimately must be our drumbeat or something that coheres around that notion. And I think it is possible as well within an alliance to exert some degree of discipline; it has been done before. If the Panzers are lined up on the channel ports, then you have people galvanized. And even on something like an expeditionary operation like Afghanistan, you can get people to cohere.

If you look at the work that Alastair Campbell performed for NATO during the Kosovo crisis, he exerted some degree of discipline with just a few very simple processes that he took from the political arena like grid meetings, looking which leaders were making public pronouncements on what day, so making sure people weren't competing with each other. And then having a rebuttal system, a political rebuttal system put in place for NATO and maintaining those clear, consistent messages as a drumbeat. I'm not saying they got it right or that it was perfect there, but I think it does offer a glimpse of a way to do things.

Dr. ERIC V. LARSON: Just a couple of responses. One, I think, in some cases, sticking with the master narrative may be the right thing to do but I have to say in a lot of cases, you know, I think what you really want to try to understand is issues like what specific values are important to your target audiences that you also subscribe to so that you can attach your programs and your messages to values in a way that it's going to resonate with those societies. So the master narrative kind of leaves you mute in some ways. If you're trying to force a master narrative, that's a lot for any audience to swallow, you know?

On the second point, I'll acknowledge that militaries are very disciplined organizations and I think the Ambassador was asking before about, what about NGOs and all of these others who may be, you know, these cats that need to be herded? I think that discipline can be a more difficult sort of goal to achieve when organizations are not in military organizations.

MATT ARMSTRONG: We have time for one last question. Steve.

Dr. STEVEN CORMAN: Eric, thanks for the interesting presentation. One thing you mentioned in there is your sort of preference for attitude, behavior outcome measurements. You were talking about the need to do—you know, have a better surveying program in place, and so forth. And that brings up the elephant in the room which is measures of effectiveness and it

seems like those are relatively simple to get if you're talking about something like a mass media campaign that happens. It goes out to a lot of people. If you have the survey resources in place you can measure them. But it seems like the farther away you get from that toward more rich communication interventions like narrative ones or even more so the cultural innovations, our arts and so forth that we talked out before, the harder it is to measure those things.

Yet the government seems to demand that. And so it seems like it's a bit of a paradox to me, these things we really need to be doing and that we all agree can have a big affect are exactly the ones that are hardest to determine the effect. So I just wondered about your thoughts on that, if you have any ideas about how we pursue it or get away from it.

Dr. ERIC V. LARSON: That's a great point. We've done a lot of work on metrics and strategic communication and related areas and it's a nasty problem. You end up with these very ungainly, complicated frameworks that are very difficult to actually employ, in many cases. And there's a logic to doing all these kinds of things. You want to track measures of performance. What are your activities? What are your inputs, measures of effectiveness in terms of the tasks that you're conducting, these intermediate outcomes, how well you're doing there and then sort of strategic level kinds of outcomes.

From the vantage point of winning some war of ideas with al-Qaeda I would just simply step back to a strategic level and it's sort of like going to the optometrist. Okay, does it look better today than it did yesterday or does it look worse? It's at that level, and I don't think we even have a particularly good capability to say on a quarterly or bi-annual or even an annual basis with any degree of richness how we're doing relative to how we were doing a year ago. So there's sort of a level of generalization and one of the things that I haven't really mentioned here but I think is crucially important is introducing a strategic perspective to all this.

I'm a strategy guy, you know, really. Messaging is one tool in the quiver of a strategy guy but you have to have strategy objectives. Messaging is a set of activities you're conducting but you're doing a whole host of other things. You have a view on what's most important for achieving your objectives, and so on. I encourage a more strategic kind of view.

I worry, looking at the U.S. Government, that we're locked into this tit-for-tat thing. If somebody says a lie about the United States we're going to hit them back and counter that, and there's a certain appeal to doing that and it's almost certainly necessary to do. It's devilishly difficult to assess the effectiveness of those kinds of actions, right? So I'm in complete agreement that the metrics piece is very difficult, the measurement piece, but I think there are still things that we can fruitfully be doing to inform the direction of U.S. strategy and public diplomacy strategy.

MATT ARMSTRONG: All right, thank you. Our time's up for this, so I appreciate it. Thank you very much, Eric.

Dr. ERIC V. LARSON: Thanks so much.

MATT ARMSTONG: So instead of a fifteen-minute break, let's do a slightly more than ten-minute break. So at 1.35 we'll reconvene, so that's five additional minutes after the bottom of the hour when we're supposed to start up. So we'll have Panel 2 start at 1.35. Thanks.

Panel 2

MATT ARMSTRONG: (in progress) This is the last panel. Again, I thank the first panel, thank the keynote speakers. I want to introduce this panel. This is somewhat more of the practitioner. I want to really get some conversation going with these panelists here. I think you've seen that there's been a tremendous opportunity with the speakers that you've had before you.

Let's continue that engagement and take this further. Also I want to offer, as the Commission, that if you have any questions that you didn't ask or if you have questions that come up, please don't hesitate to shoot the Commission your questions. We have an email, pdcommission@state.gov, and we can forward them off to the speakers for you. And I didn't ask Eric, but we will have Steve Corman's presentation on our site. I'm sure he'll have it on his site as well. And any other material, we will have available for you.

So let me introduce the panelists. Appreciate all of them being here again. So starting from your right, my left, Ambassador Richard LeBaron, designated Coordinator of the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications, otherwise known as the CSCC, in September 2010. The Ambassador is a career diplomat with over thirty years experience abroad and in Washington. Most recent overseas posting was as Deputy Chief of Mission at the Embassy in London from August 2007 to 2010; served as Chargé d'Affaires in London February to August '09 prior to that.

Damon is currently serving as the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, leads the Policy's Global Strategic Engagement Team or GSET. It's the military; you have to have an acronym. In this role, Damon advises Under Secretary Michèle Flournoy and her staff on the formulation, coordination and implementation of departmental strategic engagement and communication policy and plans.

Dr. Chris Paul, Social Scientist here at RAND, works out of the Pittsburgh office. He's been writing and teaching in the area of strategic communication. In fact, one of his publications is out there on the—actually a couple of publications. I was thinking of the RAND publication, but also your book is out there as well. Out on the table out there with our strategic communication is the RAND publication recently. It's a survey of strategic communication and public diplomacy documents. Writing and teaching in the area of SC, public diplomacy information operations over several years, perhaps most recent is his 2011 Strategic Communication: Origins, Concepts, and Current Debates.

And then all the way from across the pond, who did have to deal with a visa issue, is the UK's Royal Navy Commander Jonathan Worthington. He's Head of Defence Studies at the Royal Navy, specializes in strategic communication and influence operations and quite a bit in narrative. He has a political background as well. His comments on Alastair Campbell, I think, were firsthand experience or close to it. Operational military experience includes the duties of Chief of Strategic Communication, Helmand, Afghanistan, during 2008 and '09.

And small world, Cliff Gilmore and Jonathan, you actually did cross paths or just within hours missed each other?

Commander JONATHAN WORTHINGTON: It was in Kandahar we met.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Okay. So with that, I'm going to start with Ambassador LeBaron and turn it over to you. Thank you.

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: Thank you. Two rules for ambassadors. They get a little bit longer, about five minutes longer than the other speakers. Isn't that right, Ambassador? Yeah, and they don't like to sit so I'm going to go over here. So just bear with me, all right. I wanted to (inaudible) when a sixty year old guy does it, but I want to do a shout out to Therese Dizon over here. Therese was an intern at CSCC this last summer. She's a student at USC, and she's our youth wing of CSCC for what it, you know, consists of. But we want to get more people like her involved in the kind of work we do. What is the work we do?

The source of my job is discontent at senior levels of government. The President and the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense and CIA Director and others were talking, and they said, you know, we do a lousy job at pushing back at al-Qaeda propaganda. And so let's try it again. Let's try to restructure something. Let's try to put together a little effort that makes sense, that really makes a difference. And so I got a call about just a little over a year ago and Judith McHale said, "Why don't you do this?" I'm not an expert on strategic communications, not an expert on al-Qaeda, but I know how to bang heads across the interagency very gently and effectively. And there were two principles they gave me.

They said, we want you to use this vast intelligence and knowledge that we've developed over the last ten years about al-Qaeda and its affiliates in order to inform your communications. Not rocket science, but wasn't much done in the past. So we've got all these smart people, some of them whom you've met today. All of them have had contracts with various government agencies and all of whom contributed in many ways. And they are peppered in the bureaucracy as well, lots of smart people, lots of good ideas. They weren't being used or paid attention to for the most part. The focus was on high-level messaging and not on how you get there and how you use that messaging.

The other principle, they said, make it a genuine interagency effort, not just State Department. Make it across the government. So on my staff I have a Senior Intelligence Analyst who coordinates all our research, all our integrated research. I have officers from the Special Operations Command who work for me. And I have people from the Open Source Center and other parts of the U.S. Government. And it really, really makes a difference, not just because they come with their skills but because they can reach back into those bureaucracies to their colleagues and their capabilities and bring them into the organization.

So a lot of what we do is pure leverage. We're not a big organization. We'll never be bigger than about fifty people total. And the amount of your PD budget being spent on this is not large, less than one percent of the overall State Department PD budget, and that's where most of the money comes from now. So we got started on this just over a year ago. We're moving into our second year. And we've thought a lot about narratives, but we're very simple people. We thought about narratives because we said to ourselves, well, let's understand the audience, you know, the same thing that the guy making the soap opera says.

Let's understand who's watching the show. So it's not complicated. I mean narratives are just part of what the audience responds to, what they understand, how they see the world, what they're interested in. It's not very complicated, frankly. I mean the details of their particular narratives may be somewhat complicated and may be somewhat difficult for us to understand, but that's why we have experts like Dr. Corman.

And that's why we commissioned to study with another California group called Monitor 360. And they did us a little study called Special Report: Al-Qaeda Master Narratives and Affiliate Case Studies: Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. You know, we can find this stuff. We know what they respond to, what their myths are, what their conspiracies are, what their belief systems are. And then the key is what do you do with that? Because, you know, we know a lot. We know a lot about these people. So what do we do with it? Well, first of all, we have to understand that we are not trying to communicate with the whole world on these issues. The number of Muslims, the number of people around the world that even think about terrorism, even ever give it a thought is infinitesimally small.

The number of Muslims who are going to ever consider extremism or violence is tiny, tiny, tiny. So our objective in CSCC is to go after this little audience segment that might be prone to persuasion to become violent, okay? Very tiny audience segment. And what we're trying to do is influence them or influence people around them, influence them or the people around them or the environment in which they're in. And I call this sort of narrative nudge because I just want to nudge them a little bit in a different direction when the other side is trying to convince them to become violent and to attack others.

So all I want to do is introduce a little bit of doubt about the message that they're hearing and nudge them in a different direction. I don't care if they like us. I don't care if they believe in our foreign policy. I don't care if they disagree with our Middle East policies, all of our Middle East policies. I care if they're deciding to kill us. That's it. So this is very specialized public diplomacy, and I rely on all of my other colleagues in the public diplomacy sphere to take care of all the other stuff.

So we're very focused on a very, very narrow mission. And I think that's important, that we're not trying to sell a big product here. We're trying to nudge a few vulnerable people who are very dangerous if they take one course. We're trying to nudge them in a different direction. Part of our operation is online. We have a Digital Operations Team. You know, we talked about audience a lot. That's where we go out and look for the audience. We go out onto websites, and we try to find the people and find the conversations where this sort of nudging from the other side is going on, and we want to engage those people.

We want to offer another view. And one of the ways we do that is we make very short—here's another phrase I thought I'd never use. We make very short mashups, mashup videos, YouTube-style videos that are not made just because we like to make little movies but because we use them as part of a conversation when we're trying to do the nudge, okay?

Now, I'm going to show you a sampling of these. These have English subtitles. We would never use English. We use Arabic and Urdu and Somali. But for your convenience, these have English. But these are examples of some videos we've done which emphasize one of the most vulnerable parts of the al-Qaeda narrative. And their most vulnerable piece right now for

them is they're not there in the Arab Spring. They're just not there. And we want to emphasize that over and over again. You're not there. You're not important. Nobody cares. You know, emphasize their weakness, push them more and more into the margin. And we see this not only online. We see it in places like Al Jazeera, which used to be the outlet for bin-Laden, now almost will not cover his successor, Ayman al-Zawahiri, almost won't even carry his statements. And if they do carry it, it'll be five-second clips.

So it's a very interesting phenomena, and it's something—you know, it isn't introducing a U.S. narrative. It's recognizing the most powerful narrative going on in the Middle East right now and riding the wave, just riding the wave and making sure that we don't screw up the wave as we're riding it. So let me see if Lance can bring these up. And what you're going to see is basically some videos that are more or less self-explanatory but emphasize this contradiction.

VIDEO: Arab Awakening versus al-Qaeda, videos by the Digital Outreach Team. Events on the ground contradict the ideology of Ayman al-Zawahiri. There is no hope to remove the corrupt regimes in Muslim countries except by force. And there is no chance to bring about change through peaceful action. Let anyone who disagrees give me a single example. The people have ousted the regime! The Supreme Council of Armed Forces is taking over state affairs. The youth revolution forced Mubarak to leave.

VIDEO: Produced by the Digital Outreach Team. No democracy in Islam. One of the disasters of times, and the great ordeals of faith, and its colossal bizarre aspects, is the infiltration of some of those regimes that were born as Western infidels, grew up as blatantly Western, and was raised as a Western adulteress and that is the so-called democracy.... Algeria is free and democratic! We ended up with an extremely hideous, overly deformed, insulting reject; which acquired an ugly name: the Islamic Democracy! People want to oust corruption. People want constitutional reform. People want democracy. Free elections! That's it! People have ousted the regime! Facebook.com/DigitalOutreachTeam

VIDEO: The Arab nations are rising up.... Thanks to the Egyptian people, and a thousand congratulations to Egypt! PBS NEWSHOUR "Freedom" Facebook.com/DigitalOutreachTeam PBS NEWSHOUR

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: You can see what we were trying to do here. It's nothing too sophisticated. Somebody just asked me, "How much do these things cost?" It cost the staff time. There's nothing here that we paid for, no fancy production costs. We've hired a couple of producers now because we want to do more and we want to do better. But this sort of thing, you know, any teenager can do it. You just have to have the idea. We hired very smart people, who can work in these themes of contradiction and understand how people respond and understand how to do it in Arabic and Urdu. So it's not technically difficult. It's getting the ideas right and just putting them into action.

But I want to emphasize that this is not broadcasting. This is narrow casting, and we're going after a very narrow audience. These videos are made to supplement a conversation online. And we know a lot of people are watching that conversation, but we're just using the technique of talking to a person online and hoping that others are seeing that and being influenced by that conversation. And that's one of the reasons it's so hard to measure, is because you never know who it was that didn't participate in that conversation but who is affected by it or influenced by it.

So this is one of the challenges of metrics. But this emphasizes the essential weakness of al-Qaeda and its ideology. It's not really responding to what people care about. And that's how you operationalize narrative. You find out what your audience cares about and you emphasize that. Rarely do we say anything about the United States. In those videos, there was nothing. The only thing that associated that with the United States was the title at the end saying it was made by us.

So we're not talking about selling our policy towards democracy or our policy towards change in the Middle East. We're emphasizing a contradiction. Other people in the State Department are working hard to help support those young people and help support those movements and do other kinds of messaging that supports that. But our job is to use that narrative in a very specific way against a very narrow target and a diminishing target, I would say, as our previous speaker said.

Now, early on somebody said to me, or a lot of people said to me, you know, you need to use positive narratives. You know, you've got these negative narratives about them, but you need to use positive narratives. And I've been at this game for a little while, of diplomacy. And when people start talking about positive narratives in the Middle East, we've got a little shorthand for it. It's called happy Muslims in Dearborn. And those happy Muslims may or not be happy, but they do get brought up over and over again as examples of diversity in American life. It doesn't work. It's old. It's worn out. And, you know, it's sort of silly really to take a little segment of our population and use them as poster children for the United States of America. But we thought a lot. We still think about this idea of positive narratives. And the one area we've worked on and I worked with Damon here quite a bit on and with the interagency is the notion—and again I'm using this notion in a narrow counterterrorism sense—the notion of resilience. And essentially the notion is you can attack us, you can threaten us, you'll even succeed once in a while, but we're not going anywhere.

This is a resilient society. We're a resilient community. You can do what you want, but you're not going to succeed. And the message then to the potential adherent is, why join an organization that isn't going to succeed anyway? So we've been developing this resilient theme. We've been doing it with our British partners, with the Australians, who have a big project on resilience, and several other of our foreign partners.

The trick is now to translate this into a message that influences our specific target audience. Let me give you one of the challenges. In Urdu and in Arabic, there's no word for resilience. Or the word they use in Arabic is more akin to the word they use for Palestinian resistance, which doesn't really work for us.

So we have to invent concepts to illustrate the word. It's a word that we sort of instinctively know the meaning of. But we're working on that, and we'd really appreciate any intellectual help with that and practical help as well. But the kinds of things we're doing, for example, we're supporting small projects at about ten of our posts around the world, where they partner up with an NGO and they say, "How do we illustrate resilience in this society?" So we can start to get some examples of it. Or how do we illustrate the resilience demonstrated by victims of terrorist acts and their families? How do we turn that into an effective message, not

just a nice message, not just a sweet message, but an effective message against our target audience?

So we're doing a lot on that positive narrative. But for the most part, our work is pushing al-Qaeda and its affiliates' ideology into the dustbin of history. And they're helping us. And they're no good at this, frankly. So we've just got to make sure we keep pushing. Thank you.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Thank you. Damon, I am noting that you are not an ambassador. I'd like to note that Ambassador LeBaron was the only person from the State Department that we had here. We appreciate that, but this is interesting because we do have three military folks and one State. And I want to get into that in a bit later. So Damon, go ahead.

DAMON STEVENS: Thank you. Thank you very much. I want to add my, to the core, some appreciation to the Commission for having this discussion today. I certainly appreciate the opportunity, and I also want to associate myself with the Chairman's earlier comments as well as others about the great work both Matt and Cliff have done with this. And so the Department is proud to have such a visible representation of our support to this entity through Cliff's service. So again thank you very much for this opportunity.

What I'd like to do in the limited time that I have is really two things. One is, as briefly as possible, answer the direct question about how the Department of Defense looks at this term "narratives" and the concept of narratives, and walk a little bit through the actual implementation of the concept of narratives, and then, two, take a little bit of a step backwards and address what I think is almost more importantly what we're trying to do to address the underlying reason of why we're having this conversation today and, in many regards, as Ambassador LeBaron mentioned, the creation of his organization and this conversation we've been having now for many years.

So on the first part about narratives, I come from an organization, represent an organization that is steeped in doctrine and plans. And we have manuals, and we abide by those publications and issuances. And the term "narrative" is not part of the official lexicon. It's not defined anywhere. It's not a term of use that we utilize in the day-to-day business. But that being said, it is spattered throughout the broader discussions. We have a Commanders Handbook on Strategic Communications, which has a lot of discussions about battle of narratives. We have our combatant commands that utilize the term. And it generally is inline with the discussions we had earlier today. It is the broader story. It is the actions and the words put together. So it's fairly inline, but it's not a term that we use. What we do do is the creation of thematics and themes that many of you are aware of. And that is a process that is utilized throughout the Force, and it's an important one to recognize. And it's used from our Public Affairs officials and our MISO which used to be known as PSYOP, but our Military Information Support Operations officers.

Those themes are usually very much well thought out. In fact, almost before any MISO activity or program gets approved, the thematics are part of that approval process which get fairly senior-level buy-in. Usually they consist of themes to couch any operation under it, but it also includes themes to avoid. And that's usually the process by which we do this unifying effect of making sure that our activities are all somewhat aligned.

So thematics is really the main process and the development of thematics, and there's people that specialize in that. That's how we go about getting across this unified messaging. There are some challenges that we have, and I think they're important to mention really to meet the execution of these themes in our MISO. One both Steve and Eric mentioned, metrics, I do want to make sure that we talk a little bit about this. Frankly, I think that is the discussion about how difficult metrics is—and that we said it here today, I said it last year, five years ago.

When you go a Congressional testimony about our activities and why they are—we talk about how difficult it is for metrics and getting our arms around it, but we're going to redouble our efforts and really try hard. It's the same thing we said back in 2001. This issue of metrics is critically important. For those of you particularly in academia, I really want to urge you to think about, while it may not be particularly sexy, to really focus on how do you do metrics and how do you do these measurements in reality because it is a gaping hole.

The Department of Defense as well as the rest of the U.S. Government—and if anybody tells you something different, I think they're disillusioned—it's all about budgets right now. Everything is focused on budgets. And these types of activities that we do, engaging with populations, if you're not able to justify and demonstrate, hey, this is how I'm making a real impact, in discussions about budgets juxtaposed to people that go, I have great metrics, this is what I'm doing, it's a difficult conversation to have. And so I do not want the day to pass without really putting a stamp, an exclamation point about this issue about metrics.

Two, other issues we have, we are constantly in conversations about—when we're talking about engagement with foreign audiences in particular, the Department of Defense has very limited engagement with the U.S. population only through a Public Affairs mechanism. But what is the Department of Defense's role in engaging particularly outside of war zones? These are real discussions. What types of thematics are appropriate? It's certainly easier to discuss and to highlight the challenges or problems with the other narrative or al-Qaeda's narrative or an opposing narrative.

It's much more difficult and complex to design the counter to that. You know, what is our narrative? What is the appropriate narrative for the United States to do? That's a complex issue and one that we deal with particularly because of the nuances involved. But at the end of the day, I think when it comes down to the realities of it, I look at the limitations. And I've spoken to many of you in this room before. And many of you who've heard me speak before know that I focus on this process of moving from the right answer, what we say on paper, to this realities of how do we actually do these things in our system of government, which is certainly the best in the world. I want to put that forward. But it is a system that has its idiosyncrasies. It has its realities. It has resources. It has authorities. It has inefficiencies within the bureaucracy.

So how do you actually create themes? How do you get hold of government solutions? How do you integrate all elements of national pride, these catch phrases in the realities of our system of governing? And that's where I truly focus on certainly for my work and encourage everyone, when we have these broad discussions, to really focus on as well. So again bottom line from the Department on narratives, not a term we use. But in general we construct thematics, this development of a unified message is something we're keenly aware of and attuned to and work hard at.

Now, that being said, I do want to really focus on really what I believe is the underlying reason for the discussion today—and I know Matt mentioned it in his opening, as well as the Chairman—of why we're having this discussion about narratives. And it really is, as the Ambassador mentioned, a frustration or at least a perception that al-Qaeda is out there with their message and their themes. And there's a perception of whether there may be resonance to it or traction. I think it's debatable. But why is the U.S. Government so bad at getting our message out? Why do we have this issue? Why are we still talking about this same topic years on end? And, frankly, I go back almost ten years. You walk your way through our thinking about why we aren't very good at doing this. And I say ten years, but obviously it's been going on for a while. But ten years, I think, is a moniker to go back to 2001, where we started off with the general premise of, well, we just need to tell them about all the great stuff we're doing.

That's what we need to do. That's why this ideology seems to have some traction. Well, that didn't work. Then we moved into a couple-year period where it was now we just need more Public Affairs to go out there and tell them our message. We need our then PSYOP folks. They need to be getting out there. We need more PA, more IO. Then that wasn't getting the reaction. Then we went into a period where it was no, we need to de-conflict and integrate all elements of information, our PA, the IO communities, de-conflict, integrate them, and that was the issue. Well, Abu Ghraib kind of showed—things weren't—you know, our popularity was shrinking.

We were not having the success that we felt that we should have. And then we went into this period of, well, maybe it's not our words. Maybe it's not the Public Affairs. It is our actions and, as P.J. so nicely stole the entire thunder of my presentation today, this concept about it is our actions that actually are communicating much more effectively, I think, than our words. And how do we ensure that we appreciate the communicative effect of our actions?

Then we went into a self-congratulatory, patting ourselves on the back for really recognizing, I think, an age-old idiom, "actions speak louder than words", to the point where now I'm fairly comfortable and optimistic that we're focusing on, well, I know we say it's about actions. I know we need to say or we need to align our actions, words, and deeds. We've written Congressional reports about it, speeches about it. I think it's in some of our guiding documents, outstanding words and absolutely right. But again going back to an earlier point I made about how do you do that in reality, how do you align your actions, words, and deeds? How do you actually get commanders to recognize the communicative value of their words? How do you get the planner—I pick Country X or Botswana or whatever—the guy who's planning, how do you get him to fully appreciate the implications and the messages that we're sending to China and to appreciate?

How do you do all of that? And I'm very optimistic that, because we've decided to really do a little self-reflection and go, you know, we've tried a lot of different things, and we're having a lot of the same conversations, that we need to take a little bit of a step back and work through these very unsexy, full of banality type of issues to get us to a point where we can start making real change. And it is those issues, I would submit, about understanding, one, it's about culture, having the culture of our leaders and our commanders understand that it's the actions that they take, the plans that they draft that are communicating.

It is getting them to appreciate the communicative value. It's getting, as a culture, all of us understanding audience perceptions and reactions, not necessarily always taking those into account, not always reacting off of them because sometimes it's just not appropriate, but at least understanding the broad audience reactions and perceptions and institutionally putting that into the process of which we develop our plans and processes and actions. It's those types of things that, if I were to give a presentation here today, would make people's eyes roll back and fall to sleep. But it is the shift from what do we actually mean when we say these laudatory comments; aligning actions, words, and deeds; all elements of national power; communicating through actions.

How do we actually do that in the realities where the Department of Defense right now is very much focused on? And I certainly hope in the future, at a future opportunity to come and speak to this body, and certainly I'm working with many of you here, that we will make significant changes. Because it is going to come down to training, it's going to come down to culture, it's going to come down to having leaders assume the responsibility.

This is not about Public Affairs. This is not about our IO people. This is about our leaders and planners appreciating the communicative value and really focusing on how do we provide the tools and the information necessary for these leaders to take on this additional burden. So again I appreciate the opportunity to speak here today. I look forward to the questions on this very, very important topic. So thank you.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Damon, thanks. Chris?

Dr. CHRISTOPHER PAUL: Thanks, Matt. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Commission, and valued guests. Before I dig into the meat of my remarks, I'd like to say a few words about narrative. Notwithstanding Professor Corman's excellent introduction to the topic earlier today, in the conversations we've had, including that one, I've noticed at least two different uses of the term "narrative." One is as something they do that we need to counter. And the other, at risk of oversimplifying, is something that we'd like to take advantage of because it's important how people think about and process information. So we need to develop and employ our own narratives.

In my research and writing on public diplomacy and strategic communication, I don't tend to use the concept of narrative or the term centrally. But I think it's particularly potentially useful, and I'm particularly curious to hear what Commander Worthington has to say about it. Central in British language, it's formally ensconced in a joint doctrinal note, and I'm curious to hear how that as a central concept is working out for them. But what I'd like to share in my remarks is some—given that I haven't traditionally used it centrally, to review some of the recommendations and findings from some of my existing work and think about how the concept of narrative could either support those recommendations or how those recommendations could support the employment of (inaudible).

So I'll begin by reviewing some of the core findings from the 2009 study I did on our strategic communication, which I reviewed a significant stack of reports, white papers, opinion pieces, and did some interviews all on the topic of reforming and improving public diplomacy in

a strategic communication.² There was a great breadth in these reports. There was certainly not consensus, but there were themes. That was one of the interesting things about surveying all of them, was identifying some of these key themes.

So I'm going to hit the four key themes from this stack of reports and think about how narrative relates to them. So the first predominant theme was the call for leadership. Many of these white papers and reports suggested leadership as critical. And I think there's an important relationship between leadership and narratives. If thinking about narrative in the sense of something we're going to mobilize and employ on our own behalf, leadership is key in that. If you don't have leadership buy-in to your narratives, you're going to have some disconnects. Ideally, narratives should come from leadership. So that begs a practical question, coming back to what Damon said, how do we get leaders to be sources of narrative or to buy into narratives? I think as a good starting point is getting leaders to ask the question, well, how is that going to contribute to our narrative? Just asking that question alone will mobilize staffs to help them answer that question, and that's a big, important step in the process.

The second major theme in that 2009 summary of these various white papers and reports was a demand for increased resources. I don't think that is particularly germane to narrative, so I'll skip it.

The third was a call for a clear overall strategy, and that's related both to narratives and to leadership. Narrative might be a way to articulate strategy, or strategy might be articulated in such a way that it points towards or contributes to narratives and in both senses of the way we've used narrative, both in what we hope our narrative is and in identifying narratives that we want to oppose, reject, or modify.

The fourth major theme from this 2009 study was a call for better coordination. And I think that's another way that narrative might be useful and contributing to coordination both within departments and between them. To the extent that we have a small set or singular target narratives, if those are disseminated, it doesn't have to be in an authoritative or coercive form. But if there are agreed narratives for the government, then individual departments or individual organizations or individual formations when we get into the military domain can act in support of those narratives without unnecessary restrictions on the kinds of utterances and signals that they're trying to send. And I think that connects to an important tension that often shows up in these discussions, the tension between control of information and the risk of having a loose canon in the ship of communications.

So I think narrative is a tool that can help us find the appropriate middle ground without risking having all of our representatives sound like robot automata that are repeating the same three talking points nor having everyone talking orthogonally to each other on their own message. If there's a consensual narrative, then you can trust your representatives to speak their own mind, to talk in their own voice in a way that they hope, they think, they believe supports the narrative. In July of this year, I had the opportunity to testify before the House Armed Services Committee's Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities. And in that testimony, I offered four recommendations. And again I want to go through each of those and

² See "Whither Strategic Communication?" http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/OP250.html

talk about how I think it might support or be supported by narrative. The first piece of advice I offered was the requirement to specify information end states. And I can't claim credit for this. In fact, this is a piece of advice offered by the Army War College's Professor Dennis Murphy. But I think it's the best single piece of advice in this area that I've heard, so I repeat it given every opportunity to do so. And I think this is another way that narrative connects to this.

If we require commanders and decision makers to be clear about the information end states that they want, one way to do this would be to, in the defense context, to make it a formal requirement for commanders' intent. Would the commander's intent require an information end state? Alternatively, that could be phrased as a commander's preferred narrative. Or those end states could be supported by narratives. And again, having a requirement for commanders to be specific about what they want in the information environment and/or what narrative they want their subordinates to try to support, it creates a forcing function that forces subordinates to think about that. But it doesn't over-constrain them. It gives them a general order that says these are the three talking points, and you may only say these three things. It creates guidance. It creates the kind of latitude and autonomy that is traditionally available to military units. But it creates a forcing function to encourage thought about information end states and narratives and how you might get there.

A second recommendation I offered was to nest strategies and goals. This stems from the observation that we have highest-level national strategic objectives, but these are often very broad and, on a narrative level, often lack narrative compulsion. They aren't emotive. They aren't necessarily coherent. What's missing is intermediate subordinate objectives that lower-level executors of operations can connect so that they can see how the things that they do directly connect national objectives. Narratives might be a way to help make those connections. There's always the challenge, of course, that, if you're too specific in your national strategic objectives, that what you're talking about becomes classified. You could write those intermediate supporting objectives in a way that would result in them being classified, although that would still be useful to at least military personnel. There's got to be a way to write narratives supporting strategic objectives or narrative objectives or objectives for narratives that would remain unclassified but would provide sufficient guidance for subordinates to execute.

The third piece of advice I offered was to build strategic communication public diplomacy as a crawl-walk-run enterprise. And those of you who have any experience with the military will recognize this from training that you crawl before you walk, you walk before you run. And this is just a simple piece of advocacy to recognize that some things have to logically come first as we get better at informing, influencing, and persuading. We can debate what belongs at the crawl level, what belongs at the walk level, and what belongs at the run level. For me, the crawl level focuses on the things we do, having a strategy; having an objective for our informing, influencing, and persuading; having it so that we're not constantly engaged in information fratricide and as some minimal steps towards de-confliction; recognizing that actions communicate. And I think, thinking about the different ways we talk about narrative, that that way where we're trying to mobilize narratives starts at the crawl level.

Looking at the narratives that they use, that the adversary uses, or that are out there that are mobilized by third parties but that are inimical to our interests, that's probably at the walk or

the run level. But again you might push back and disagree on that. But I think both in terms of thinking about narrative crawl-walk-run issues will end more broadly in this area, that's useful.

Fourth, I suggested we build strategic communication from the bottom-up as well as from the top-down. So often, especially in all these calls from broader leadership and a desire to improve how we coordinate and pushing things from the top-down, there's opportunities from the bottom-up. I don't know if there are opportunities to create narrative from the bottom-up. If we're employing narrative, there has to be some kind of higher-level agreement about what the objectives are and what narratives might support that. Now, there has to be the opportunities for subordinates to have some flexibility and apply that to the specific context. But I don't know if the narrative can be built from the bottom-up. But I'm happy to hear ideas, if anyone has any suggestions on how that might take place. And in the interest of conserving time, (inaudible).

Commander JONATHAN WORTHINGTON: I think this is on. Firstly, I must say to the Commission here, it's a fantastic privilege for me to be invited here. I can't offer a Ministry of Defense perspective. I will offer an individual perspective of someone who's dipped his toe in this sort of area a couple of times. The danger of speaking in the graveyard slot is that everybody else has eaten the sandwiches. Forgive me if I end up going over some familiar ground. Just humor me and regard it as reinforcement.

Anyway, I think there's very, very little I can teach you here because I am after all, I think, in the city which produces narratives on an industrial scale. So I can just offer you a little cottage industry perspective from over the herring pond.

Why are narratives considered important? Well, I think, as P.J. said it more eloquently earlier, everything we do is subjected to instantaneous, widespread, and often forensic scrutiny. Some will say, some fairly senior people have said that actions speak for themselves. Actions speak for themselves. No. No, they don't. Actions do not speak for themselves. You have to fill the void. You have to fill the void or others will fill that void for you. You have to put your take on what's happened. You cannot not communicate. And as we all know, events of sometimes sub-tactical significance can have strategic ramifications. The placing of a flag on a statue, perhaps poor treatment of civilians in a conflict zone, a speech, a comment, increasingly there are few places now to hide. And the old sports jocks saw of "what goes on tour stays on tour" no longer applies.

Someone somewhere will have a camera, and someone will record what is going on. Narratives, if you use them, they explain, they can help galvanize support, and they can be used, of course, to deconstruct and oppose.

What is a narrative? Well, Eric I thought did a very good job earlier of describing what that is. But from my point of view it's a plausible storyline linking past, present, and future. It makes sense of everything. It should be a common expression of corporate vision. That can then translate into a basic consensus of commonly-shared values and principles for unified action.

Now, as a military person, I can't possibly leave this stage here without mentioning Clausewitz once. I mean he talked of a paradoxical trinity of people of the armed forces and states that must be bound close together if there must be any prospect of success in any military

endeavor. Yet, self-evidently, it can only be by means of words that this common endeavor can be communicated and cemented, namely through narrative.

A narrative can help you frame the strategic context, and it can help guide tactical actions. Now, what I find interesting is that those who have been involved in the business of political campaigning instinctively get this. And I watched the Ambassador's excellent films earlier, and I thought, those to me are just like the sort of things I would expect to see in the last few months of your presidential campaign, exactly the sort of thing.

So it puzzles me that we don't apply these same well-honed skills to these much more important military endeavors where lives are being lost. You know, political campaigners, it's their meat and drink, constructing narratives. They do it on a daily basis in speechwriting, in marketing, in crafting political manifestos that eventually become a guide to action. And if you have a strategy that is correct, there is no great need for your master narrative to change. An example from my own history in the Second World War, the master narrative never needed to change. At the beginning of the war, we thought it was possible along with allies to contain Hitler's expansionist desire through a concerted allied action. We never envisaged it was going to become an existential threat. Yet when it did become such, the narrative never needed to fundamentally change. It stayed. And indeed narratives have always played a part in the way democratic nations portray themselves in peace and war, interpreting events in a way that resonates with the country's past and perceived destiny.

Churchill was a master of this, and he was able to turn the disaster of Dunkirk into a success story through great use of narrative. And if I look at Franklin Delano Roosevelt, I mean, a masterful example of the very acme of strategic communication, the way he carefully guided America, America that was at best skeptical but probably at worst downright hostile to the idea of stepping into the Second World War. The way he carefully led America by the hand through his fireside chats so that eventually they were ready for this—ready for this experience shows masterful use of these skills. By framing what you are doing and framing your strategy, a narrative can help individuals, teams, the military discard—it can also help them discard actions, or proposed courses of action, that don't necessarily conform to the narrative or, indeed, the strategy. And, again, I look to an American model.

I think Sorenson, as Kennedy's speech writer, I think he was able to craft a narrative for a blockade of Cuba. But he couldn't, for the life of him, craft a narrative for Curtis LeMay's rather more extreme ideas for bombing, strategic bombing and, therefore, it was discarded. He couldn't make it into a plausible narrative and therefore it allowed them to step back from that as an option. And I argue that warfare has now changed and that you need to assess the informational environment before you do anything. I'm not saying that your STRATCOMS expert should automatically assume charge of everything, far from it. But he needs to be consulted. He doesn't have to have an executive role; he can have an advisory function. There when strategy is being crafted to assess the information environment—as a friend of mine who's written a book on this, Steve Tatum, says, just as before you launch an aircraft, you assess the weather, just as before you operate on a patient in a hospital, you assess his health, so before embarking on an action in these days of 24-hour media scrutiny, you need to assess the information environment.

Narratives, of course, don't arise spontaneously, but are deliberately constructed and reinforced out of ideas and thoughts that are in current use. And what people believe and what they do derives from a value system that the narrative must tap into. It must tap into the culture and, as we heard in the very first presentation, the excellent first presentation this morning, being logical is not enough. What you do must resonate with what seems instinctively natural and right. An argument or action that taps into the narrative will always defeat one that may be coherent and logical but which doesn't feel right somehow.

I was very taken earlier by Dalia's comments—I think she's left now—on the use of poets and playwrights and others, cultural experts. And certainly we need to think more of using and employing those capabilities. It might seem an anathema to some of us in the military, but sometimes being able to frame arguments in a way that resonate with people and resonate with their culture is hugely important. While though underscoring here today the importance of words, the importance of narrative, we do though have to guard slightly against overstating the power of words because eventually if your words and deeds do not match up, then your credibility will increasingly be called into question.

Now, credibility isn't quite a sort of a binary thing like virginity, but it's not far off it and if you lose that credibility it's hugely, hugely difficult to get that back. I think one of my great heroes, one of Archimonde, has certainly got this point. When the British Navy were losing lots of destroyers during the evacuation of the British Army from Crete seventy years ago in 1941, pressure was put on Admiral Cunningham, ABC Cunningham, to desist and stop this; it was just getting too costly. And his words were, "Gentlemen, it takes three years to build a war ship, but it takes three hundred years to build a reputation." He understood the importance of narratives as a military man. Countering an out narrative. You know, time is of the essence so I'm not going to say too much here; we can bring this up more in conversation at the end. But if I can be very glib, essentially, I've been better and more convincing and more attractive than the other side, or at least by showing yourself to be such. In terms of using narratives more, we need to get over this notion that spin is somehow bad, that propaganda is bad.

It has pretty innocent origins as we know dating back to Pope Gregory XV and propagation of the Catholic faith, and it had pretty innocent connotations up through the First World War. But now propaganda and spin is something dreadful; it's bad, wicked, naughty, you'll go blind, don't do it and that is wrong. We need to get over that. This is now an arm of war and we need to accept that, and put the processes and structures in place. Swiftiness, we talked of earlier, we need much more mission command here. We need much more mission command.

We need to allow our junior officers to respond to something on the balance of probability rather than waiting and checking everything throughout the hierarchy. We need people, empowered individuals, acting as a consciousness—a conscious for STRATCOM and the narrative at the highest level, perhaps something akin to what Alastair Campbell did during the Kosovo conflict is provide something of a template. It may not be perfect but maybe that is something that can be looked at over time. And he must also ensure that the informational aspect is considered from the very outset.

I think as another Press Secretary to President Kennedy, Ed Murrow, once said, you know, when offered the job, "I need to be there at the take offs as well as the crash landings," so that you can push things in the right direction. Perhaps you also need something like political rebuttal teams as well to challenge the al-Qaeda and other narratives, to be doing—going on the offensive and producing some of those sort of excellent videos that we saw earlier. We also need, I think, greater professionalization in this area as well. I mean, what we're doing here, I think ladies and gentlemen, is not a lot different to what goes on in the private sector as their daily meat and drink; they call it marketing. But, you know, this is board-level stuff for private sector companies. We've got private sector representatives here. This is board-level stuff. We need to take this more seriously. The private sector wouldn't give this to a bunch of gifted amateurs, we shouldn't either. We need to professionalize this and perhaps we can learn quite a bit more from industry. But above all else, above all else, we need to take this much more seriously. As Clausewitz said, every age has its own type of war, and we live in an age where information is now a primary weapon.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Thank you. I'm going to take the prerogative and we're going to extend the Q&A period to at least ten till maybe a little bit longer, five till. Commander, I did give you the additional leeway. You did have the longest commute to the meeting today. So appreciate it and the statements were all terrific and each one of you could have been your own panel for the duration. Commissioner Anne—hold on, the mic will come to you. Front to Commissioner Anne Wedner please.

ANNE WEDNER: I like to be the first. Okay, just two comments. One is on metrics which I think are really important and I wish that, in your capacities in advising, and hopefully in ours as well, that we will hopefully train people to look at long-term influences. That this isn't something that we're measuring quarterly or yearly, but this is something that we're looking at decades and centuries about and that that should be the focus and then it's easier to figure out the metrics there.

So I wonder how you're talking about it. And then the other is this actions/words divide that you guys have talked about and you're more active with it on a daily basis. But some things aren't—the actions, I think, that our British friend here defined this better but, you know, the current narrative about our economic meltdown in the United States is seen as an al-Qaeda victory and that is the narrative that has been put on that event and, you know, while it has nothing to do with that. So the fact of our meltdown is something that requires a response under narrative development from our side. So I just wondered about your comments on that.

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: It goes back—on the meltdown issue, I think it goes back to this issue of resiliency and demonstration that we can go through this process and we can come out of it and we will come out of it, and that's the message of resiliency in that context. And it happens to be true. I mean, just because we have a downturn in our economy—we had an upturn for a long time and we had a generation of stockbrokers who thought there were only upturns. And now we had a downturn, we have a generation who think there are only downturns.

What we need is to figure out that we are a resilient society in the long-term and that we have the structures available to correct for those problems. But—

ANNE WEDNER: Al-Qaeda's talking that they caused this downturn.

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: They can talk about it but nobody believes them. You know, one of the mistakes we make about al-Qaeda is we think that people actually believe what they say. Very few people actually do and we fooled ourselves into thinking that they have this all-powerful communications apparatus that is actually convincing thousands and thousands of people all the time, you know? Whereas we know, from our interception of their communications, that they have little seminars among themselves and they worry about exactly the stuff we're worrying about. How do we measure resonance? How do we do measures of effectiveness? How do we know that our message is getting out?

What happens because—they discuss, Al Jazeera isn't covering us; what do we do? You know, we've got to buy some other journalists. You know, so it's almost sometimes a strange mirror image. But on the metrics, I agree with you that the long-term is important. But as a bureaucrat, in the long-term you're dead. And so when I put together this organization over the last year and a half, or less than a year and a half, I wasn't given the luxury of saying, let's do research for a couple of years, figure out how to do this and then do it. No, we had to think and do, and we had to do it very quickly because people in his department and other departments of government were saying, you know, we've tried this before. Let's give them a chance. Let's give them about two months and see how they're doing and then we'll consider whether it makes any sense and then we'll move on to something else.

So you've got to think and do at the same time and especially in this budget environment as Damon said, there is no long-term. There's fiscal '13 is as long-term as you're going to get. But on measurement, there are some things we can do and we can measure. And, you know, some of these are, at this point, they're quite impressionistic. But you can measure, for example, online if you're hitting a nerve because people will react to you. So if their propagandists feel the need to react to us, we know we're hitting a nerve. If they don't even react then we know that we're ineffective because they don't care, you know; they don't need to care.

Recently, we had a group of antagonists who said, we need to form one of these digital outreach teams ourselves. Now that's the sincerest form of flattery, is imitation. Impressionistic, you know, it may be one guy saying this so we can't over emphasize it. But there also are some technical measures. At one point, after we put out that video we Zawahiri with in it, if you went into Arabic version of Google and you typed in "Zawahiri," the first thing you got was our video. That's a pretty good measure of effectiveness if you've got an anti-Zawahiri film as the first thing on Arabic Google.

Now it didn't stay there long; it's an ephemeral environment. It moves on. It shifts. But that's a technical measure you can use and you can develop. We're working with the Defense Department and the with the Department of Energy, of all people, through Sandia Labs which has some very interesting expertise on measuring online resonance, and we hope to develop some of that work over time. But the fact is you can measure it, it's hard but that's no excuse for not doing best efforts to measure effectiveness.

DAMON STEVENS: I'll almost parrot a little bit what Ambassador LeBaron just mentioned. I am ultimately less concerned about al-Qaeda taking credit for Arab Spring or taking credit for our economic downfall. I am very much focused on the narrative of what our actions relay, or even more importantly, the narrative that can be supported by our actions doing

one thing and the language that we say in the others. And we have, on occasion—I think the Middle East is a good example of this. A personal statement, but I mean, we have many times had very senior level discussions in the Middle East about our goals and these are our goals. I mean, for self-determination, plurality of thinking, human rights and free determination. This is what we articulate.

The challenges, of course, is the people in the region view our actions as being focused on counter-terrorism, support for energy and maybe some regional allies. Our actions, for very real reasons, those are our national interests, sometimes speak a little bit louder and it's that delta at the end of the day that I'm certainly more concerned about and how do we bridge that.

On the metrics issue, certainly agree the long-term, that's the ideal. I mean, but it's also analogous to the challenges we face for those of us that have been involved in the counter-radicalization, this concept that everybody says is the number one issue. We're not going to shoot our way out of it, but we need to deny terrorists the next generation of recruits.

The challenge, of course, is that our planning processes, our budget cycles, the natural attention span within the Department of Defense, it's not set up and structured to be able to deal with long-term impacts. And so it's a bridge. I mean, if you want it to sustain, you've got to focus right now on demonstrable metrics that can demonstrate value now.

The Congress, very publicly and in many occasions rightfully, has shined a very precise spotlight on the Department of Defense and some of our MISO activities around the world, saying—asking questions. How are you proving that this is of value? You're spending a considerable amount of money demonstrating. So the challenge is for us is to be able to articulate that because they're not unreasonable questions, particularly in a time—ever—but particularly at a time when resources are being weighed between different efforts.

Commander JONATHAN WORTHINGTON: Yes. About 20 years ago, the United States and Britain started to focus very intensely on what was then a pretty neglected level of warfare, the operational level. And it was absolutely right that this was done. The problem is there's been a bit of an opportunity cost, which is certainly very, very apparent to us in Britain and there's been considerable (inaudible) about this that we've lost a sense of how to do strategy and to think strategically and think more long-term. And I think we've possibly, or at least the critics say we've lost that strategic patience and we've gone for quick fixes. We've tended to use means as metrics which are self-licking lollipops here. Some of the polling that, certainly during my time in Afghanistan, and I do stress I'm probably way out of date.

Cliff is probably a lot more in date than me. But some of the polling we did was not of great statistical significance (inaudible) questions. My God, we were doing lots of it, but certainly at the time a lot of people were questioning the value of it. We're now thinking much more carefully about more appropriate metrics and we've taken a lot of advice, as you have, from anthropologists and people who are far more expert in that area. And we're looking much more at monitoring how people's behavior changes.

We may never get people to like us, and maybe we shouldn't worry about that, but we can monitor changes in behavior. Such things as are people planting less or more IEDs and is there (inaudible) perhaps between that and something (inaudible)? Are more people prepared to

come in and inform on Taliban activity than there were before? Those sort of things, they're much more useful measures in terms of (inaudible).

MATT ARMSTRONG: Commissioner Farar?

SIM FARAR: I have a couple of questions for—one for Ambassador LeBaron and one for Commander Worthington. Just a couple of questions to you, Ambassador. I don't know if it's private information or public information but the CSCC, may I ask you what your budget is there for your fifty—with your fifty employees?

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: It's \$6 million.

SIM FARAR: That's all it is?

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: But we get a lot of cooperation from other agencies, either in terms of personnel loans or actual resource sharing, project sharing. So if we parlay that, I'd say I'd estimate it, I'd add another \$2 million in sort of in-kind contributions.

SIM FARAR: That's still not a lot of money; \$8 million dollars.

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: It's an insignificant amount of money frankly.

SIM FARAR: It is.

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: But I don't want a lot of money for this job. It's not expensive work, you know. We could use some more, sure. You could always use more money, but those videos you saw you know, we could, we can make those for virtually nothing.

SIM FARAR: On those videos, for example, you say on YouTube, just out of curiosity how many hits do you get on that when you say it's the number one video?

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: I have that here somewhere.

SIM FARAR: Just approximately.

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: I don't want to—it varies by video. But the biggest resonance we got was a video we made about Libya and this was basically emphasizing the fact that we shared a narrative with our Arab friends, or with the Arab street. We all were against Gaddafi and so we emphasized that and that got 154,000 views. And I think this is probably a few more since this piece of paper was done. But that's sort of the high range. But keep in mind we're not going for wide viewership. We're using these videos as a conversational gambit.

SIM FARAR: Right.

Amb. RICHARD LEBARON: And so we're not trying to—we're not in a ratings game here. We're trying to measure our effectiveness by are we changing a few people's minds basically.

SIM FARAR: Well, I think you're doing a fantastic job. You know, Matt, let me just ask one more question. I think you want to get done with this, but it's really fantastic to be at a meeting like this today as a Commissioner and see so many brilliant people out there. And I'm not just saying that because there are some really brilliant minds, I've heard them speak all day today. But I do want to address one question to the Commander here. By the way, thank

you for coming the farthest, but I think she came from Paris just last night, so she's a little further than you.

But, you know, I run some private companies and I have people that, you know, try to get the message out for whatever our private companies are if they don't do the right job we usually terminate them or we get rid of them. We replace them with somebody else. It's just—is the government just too big, the English government—British government, the United States government, is it just too big? Because it bothers me that we're talking about it, we're complaining about it, we're having this discussion here about getting the message out because the message is the message, and is it just too large? The government too large or is just too large of a message?

Commander JONATHAN WORTHINGTON: Well, there is, I think, a view in academia and there are people probably in the audience (more?) expert to comment on this than me, that there is a view out there that our 18th and 19th century systems, democracy, are creaking at the seams in some way and they're just perhaps not able to respond to the sort of challenges that we are now faced with. But with that said, I mean, Churchill may have once said that democracy is the most terrible thing, but it's better than all of the other alternatives, and that's probably right. And you have to live with a certain degree of friction and a certain amount of difficulty.

I think 400 years before Christ, I think Plato made the same observation that democracies aren't necessarily the best equipped organizations for waging war. But in terms of the communications challenge, I'm not sure we've always put this at the forefront of activity. But I have a personal view here and that is that, at the risk of being controversial, that communication is a pretty good euphemism for leadership, so when people come and say to me that our comms is wrong or our communications is messed up, well, I think perhaps you—sometimes we need to look closer to home and perhaps assess are we giving the leadership that's needed?

MATT ARMSTRONG: We have one online question. I'm going to go ahead and see if we can get a quick answer to the online question:

Question: This has to do with metrics. The question is: "Might the panelists agree that a basic shortcoming of measurement is that we have not yet defined the precise units of public diplomacy and strategic communication?" He finishes the question with, "We otherwise appear to be something akin to chemists without a Periodic Table."

Dr. CHRISTOPHER PAUL: That's a clever phrasing and I can't speak for the other panelists. I don't know that I would exactly agree with that phrasing but I think it hits on a truism, that it's hard to measure often because we aren't clear about what we want. And it comes back to this call for strategy, this desire for objectives in the realm of assessment. If you have clear objectives, then at least it becomes possible to do measurement. If you don't have clear objectives, if you're not clear about what you want, how could ever possibly know that you've gotten it?

DAMON STEVENS: I'd add a couple of things. I think there're some inherent complexity with what we're trying to measure here that makes this difficult. We're not trying to measure how the sales advertising campaign or how many widgets we've sold. We're trying to influence folks and, in many regards, not to do something. How do we prove a negative, which

is extraordinarily difficult. And one—you know, I have never seen anybody really be able to—we've got polling issues, we try to do it through polling. The polling's got inherent issues due to the number of variables that go into why someone did or did not do something. And the other issue that we have—I've seen success in measuring certain programs, but the challenge, of course, is to have truly meaningful, measurable impact—in the discussion that we're having now—in budgets, it's got to be aggregable. And how do you have individual programs aggregate to get a units' worth of measurements, to get a Department of Defense amount of measurements and we're just not—haven't hit the level of sophistication or the right note on those types of metrics right now.

MATT ARMSTRONG: Any last comments from any of the panelists? Well, I want to thank the panelists and I sincerely want to thank the panelists and sincerely thank the State Department and Ambassador LeBaron for coming out here. One of the things I personally noticed is in the discussions of whether—well, strategic communication narratives and whatnot, is that it has been unfortunate that the State Department has not been there, so I'm really appreciative that the State Department is here and part of the conversation and has made a tremendously valuable contribution to the conversation.

So thank you for being here, and thank you Damon for taking your time to come on out here, Jonathan and Chris as well, so thank you panel. And then last comments by Vice Chairman of the Commission, Lyndon Olson.

Closing Comments

LYNDON OLSON: Our Chairman had to go home to Colorado and he asked me if I'd make some closing remarks. I want to say to both the panel this afternoon and this morning, thank you all for making the effort, especially to RAND for the hall and for the food and to Eric and Chris and Dalia and Lindsey, thank you. To the commissioners who made the effort to be here, getting five out of six of our commissioners is no small deal.

Thank you all for making the effort of being here and staying here. And for those of you that are students, we hope that it was a meaningful experience for you. And I want to say it's—you've heard everybody compliment these guys two or three or four times today, but this has been a superb effort put on by Matt and Cliff and the staff of the Commission and I want to commend you all. All of us, all the commissioners have been extremely impressed with the quality and the professionalism of the presentations here today and the definition of the subject matter. Matt, you and Cliff get a lot of credit for that so thank you very much. With that we are right on time to adjourn, so again, thank you all for coming, and we are adjourned.

Panelist Biographies

Steven R. (Steve) Corman is Herberger Professor and Director of the Center for Strategic Communication in the Hugh Downs School of Human Communication at Arizona State University. He currently leads the Office of Naval Office of Naval Research project studying Islamist extremists' use of narrative and is co-author of Master Narratives of Islamist Extremism

(Palgrave-Macmillan, 2011). He recently completed an engagement as Distinguished Visiting Fellow at the Centre of Excellence for National Security in Singapore.

Dr. Nick Cull is a Professor of Public Diplomacy at the University of Southern California where he directs the world's first masters program in public diplomacy. An historian by training, he is widely published widely on the topics of both past and present of public diplomacy and propaganda. His recent publications include *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989*. (CUP, 2008).

Barry A. Sanders is adjunct professor of Communications Studies at UCLA and author of the recent book, *American Avatar: The United States in the Global Imagination* (Potomac Books, 2011). Sanders is also an international corporate lawyer and President of the Board of Commissioners of the City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks.

Dalia Dassa Kaye is a Senior Political Scientist at RAND and currently a Visiting Professor and Fellow at the UCLA International Institute and Burkle Center. Kaye has published widely on a range of Middle East security issues, including Iran and regional security dynamics, political reform, U.S. diplomacy in the region, the Arab-Israeli peace process. She led a RAND project exploring challenges artists face in the region and co-authored the resulting study, *Barriers to the Broad Dissemination of Creative Works in the Arab World*.

Philip J. (P.J.) Crowley is the Omar Bradley Chair of Strategic Leadership at Dickinson College, the Penn State Dickinson School of Law and School of International Affairs, and the Army War College. He is also a Fellow at The George Washington University Institute for Public Diplomacy and Global Communication. P.J. was Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and Spokesman at the Department of State until March 2011. He served as the primary U.S. government interlocutor with major media regarding the release of classified cables by Wikileaks. P.J., a retired Air Force colonel, was also a Special Assistant to President Bill Clinton on the National Security Council staff at the White House.

Dr. Eric V. Larson is a senior policy researcher at the RAND Corporation specializing in national security affairs. His recent research has focused on al-Qa'ida's narrative, discourse, and strategy, the mobilization of public support for insurgency and terrorism, strategic communication and influence operations, and irregular warfare. His most recent publication is an essay titled "Al-Qa'ida's Propaganda: A Shifting Battlefield," in RAND's 9/11 anniversary volume *The Long Shadow of 9/11*, in which he details growing external criticism of, and internal contention within, al-Qa'ida's movement.

Ambassador Richard LeBaron was designated Coordinator of the Center for Strategic Counterterrorism Communications in September 2010. Ambassador LeBaron is a career diplomat with over thirty years experience abroad and in Washington. His most recent overseas posting was as Deputy Chief of Mission at the United States Embassy in London from August 2007 to August 2010. Mr. LeBaron served as Chargé d'Affaires in London from February to August 2009.

Damon Stevens is currently the Senior Advisor to the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy and also leads Policy's Global Strategic Engagement Team (GSET). In this role, Damon advises Undersecretary Michèle Flournoy and her staff on the formulation, coordination, and implementation of Departmental strategic engagement/ communication policy and plans.

Dr. Christopher Paul is a Social Scientist at the RAND corporation, working out of RAND's Pittsburgh office. He has been writing and teaching in the area of strategic communication, public diplomacy, and information operations for several years. Perhaps most relevant of his recent publications is his 2011 Strategic Communication: Origins, Concepts, and Current Debates.

Commander Jonathan Worthington, UK Royal Navy, is Head of Defence Studies Royal Navy and specializes in strategic communication and influence operations. His operational military experience includes the duties of Chief of Strategic Communication, Helmand, Afghanistan during 2008-09.

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